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# MY TRAVELS;

OR,

## AN UNSENTIMENTAL JOURNEY

THROUGH

## FRANCE, SWITZERLAND,

## AND ITALY.

BY

CAPTAIN CHAMIER, R.N.,

AUTHOR OF

"THE LIFE OF A SAILOR," &c.

"To feel for none is the true social art
Of the world's stoics—men without a heart."

DON JUAN, Canto V.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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# MY TRAVELS.

## CHAPTER I.

### NOTES, HINTS, AND FACTS.

The traveller in Naples, after having read up his "Murray," and made himself acquainted with the various sights, will soon find out that he has to pay for experience; and without he is content to accept for nothing, that for which others have paid pretty handsomely, he will find that Naples, although reckoned one of the cheapest places, may become a very dear one. As I am not too proud to learn, and am perfectly aware how deficient I am in common prudence, I escaped pretty well—thanks to

following advice when given, and soliciting it when required.

You drive to your inn at Naples. You cannot go wrong if you go to any on the Chiaja, Chiatamone, or Santa Lucia — they are *all* good. The Hotel de Rome is the best situated of all—that is, for the sea-view, and the view of the Bay—but it does not give great inducements either by its cleanliness or its cookery; to arrive at the Restaurant would sicken anybody but a half-starved Frenchman, or a Neapolitan. Neither am I very partial to the Hotel de Russie; for the Santa Lucia, owing to the oyster-market and all kinds of dirty food-stalls, never smells much better than a narrow street in Cologne.

You drive to your hotel, and if it is after sunset, you will soon imagine that the landlord is inclined to illuminate on the joyful occasion of another victim's arrival. Every wax candle that can be stuffed in every available place will be lighted; therefore, begin with having them all extinguished; and take very good care not to allow the horses to be taken off the carriage, or any luggage handed down, until you have made your *arrangements*. There can be no fixed price offered, for every family

differs in numbers; and rooms overlooking the sea pay more than those which look into a back street; but put your pride, if you have any—and pride is a very useless article, without you wish to pay for it—in your pocket; and make a regular agreement for *everything*. The breakfasts and dinners are generally regulated by fixed prices; but breakfast as put down on the carte, and breakfast as some hungry, healthy people like it, are two very different affairs; however, wherever you go, in all beautiful Italy, take care to have *everything* agreed upon before the porters set to work at your luggage. You will find it no bad plan always to shut the windows of your carriage on the side which you do not descend. I omitted this little precaution at Bologna, and the only thing loose was stolen.

All the hotels at Naples are extravagantly dear; but they are very comfortable and clean, and the attendance good. Mind and have the service charged in the bill, and, in proportion to your family, so reduce the charge. If you have honest servants, let them pay for themselves, and settle with them afterwards; if they are of the doubtful gender, have the price fixed for them, and charged in your bill.

You go into a shop—if the man or woman looks as sour as a lemon, you will soon imagine yourself the sun to clear away all mists and vapours. You are asked for the article you select four piastres. Do not look astonished, but offer two. You will be called your Excellency, of course, which is charged in the amount asked. The shopkeeper will throw up his or her eyes, you may hear a few saints—they are very common all over Italy—called to witness the fairness of the demand; but as none of them appear in person to testify to the truth, you can repeat your proposition; depend upon it, in offering the half, you are nearer the mark. In France, music is always marked at exactly double the price to be paid; and in Naples, such is the unfortunately inveterate habit of endeavouring to overreach everybody, that, with the exception of one or two coral shops, where they *profess* to ask the just price, there is not a shop in the whole capital which will not take one, or near about the exact half, of the sum demanded. You have to fight, of course, to maintain your proposition—but here you gain, as it is a lesson in Italian, or rather Neapolitan, thrown in for nothing; and you will have plenty of words,

and hear how that poor Sancta Maria is bothered. Pay for and take away what you buy; never give the *trouble* of having the things *sent*—it is extraordinary how the sun changes their appearance on the road. I have known a picture changed altogether.

If you take an apartment, drive—or perhaps it is as well to *walk*—through the Villa Reale, you can get into the shade there—to Mrs. Corby's, 124, Chiaja, Palazzo Bugnano—do not let the first syllable of the palace's name frighten you—there are none; in Mrs. Corby's hands you are safe; she will abide by her word; but if you go into apartments let by a Neapolitan, you cannot be too cautious or too particular: everything will be promised—I have not the least doubt that some would offer to bring the sea into your dressing-room for a bath—but once established, and the agreement signed, you will find the answer, like Shylock's, when you ask for what has been *promised*—"Is it so nominated in the bond?" Neapolitans themselves groan over the wickedness of their countrymen, but—and they shrug their shoulders—whilst the victimizer,

as he secures his prey, utters inwardly, "Purchè sia ben per me, tutto va bene."*

I suppose you comfortably lodged in the Palazzo Bugnano—everybody is your excellency, and lives in a palace, at Naples—the following ought to be about your expense:—House rent, in the season, from December to April, 100 piastres per month — that is, 3 piastres 3 carlini per day; eating,† wine, oil, candles, hire of one servant, 4 piastres 6 carlini a-day; carriage, 65 piastres a-month—2 piastres 2 carlini per diem, making in all

* If, in taking a lodging, you remark the numbers of fleas in the rooms, you will gravely be told, "Questi sono animali nobili;" it being presumed that other vermin are "animali poveri."

† As cooking utensils are not very abundant or good in Naples, and the cooks generally execrable, the best plan is to have the dinners from a ristoratore, at about two ducats a-day, for two masters and two servants. You will have ample for breakfast and luncheon. The best cook and ristoratore of this description is Gennaro, Strada Vittoria, No. 14. For large parties, suppers, &c., Nocera, in the Strada Chiaja, is the most renommé. I have not the least hesitation in saying, that a Neapolitan family, of an equal number of people, would live for half the amount I have stated—and live well, and make a great show *out* of doors. Macaroni goes a great way when it is not sufficiently boiled; it swells internally.

9 piastres 11 carlini daily. Taking the exchange at 600 grani to the pound sterling, the above will make, in English money, £1 19*s.* 8*d.* The apartments may be had for less, or *more*, as the season is good or bad, and your contract with the French cook may be somewhat reduced; but for 2 piastres a-day, you ought to be most handsomely served; indeed, 18 carlini, or one piastre and a half, is quite sufficient for *two* masters and *two* servants. As regards the carriage, you have an open or a shut one at your command and discretion, night or day; and this sum, 65 piastres, ought to *include* the "buona mano" to the coachman.

You are now housed, fed, and have a carriage: you go into society—let this be your motto: "Chi vuol vivere in pace, Vede, ascolta, e tace." You will find this as well worth remembering as the prices enumerated.

You may arrive by the steam-boat, and after viewing with delight the really-splendid view of Naples, come to an anchor in the port. You think, of course, proud son of Albion, as you are! that you are going to land—quite the reverse. You are going to remain on board: in vain you approach the gangway; there is a faithful servant of his majesty's—

"Aspettate, Signore," is the word. The captain has gone on shore, and taken with him all the passports; and it does not necessarily follow that, because your passport is visèed, you will be allowed to land at all; but providing you are not upon the register of forbidden names, you may be handed over to the custom-house harpies, after a lingering time, varying from half an hour to an hour and a half, and that time invariably appears the longest of the whole journey. Even when coming from Sicily, the same vexatious form is observed. Before you embark, your passport is taken from you, and it is returned when you are voted sufficiently sane and loyal to land in King Bomba's dominions.

There was at Leghorn a young man of about nineteen, who sent his passport to be visèed by the Neapolitan authorities in that port; the visè was refused, the consul was applied to, and inquiries made; it was of no use; in the forbidden books stood the name of Thomas Paine, who was a republican, and wrote the "Rights of Man, or Common Sense," "Age of Reason," &c.; and as this unfortunate young man rejoiced in the same name, his passport was refused. It was no use telling

this faithful guardian that Tom Paine's bones had been brought by Cobbett, ages ago, to England: the man only answered, "I cannot sign any passport, even if it were for an infant, bearing the name of Thomas Paine;" and Thomas Paine did *not* go to Naples.

A very respectable young man, having gone through the probationary hour in the harbour of Naples, was left the last man of the passengers on board the boat. Every one had been called, scrutinized, and passed but himself. He was going over the side—"Aspettate, signore—where is your permission?"

"Permission!" said the young man, "what permission?—the captain had the passport."

"What is your name, sir?"

"Thomas Moore."

"Thomas Moore cannot land; you must return by the next boat to Civita Vecchia."* And the young man, who rejoiced in the same name as the sweetest Irish poet—but the poet who wrote the verses beginning with, "Down to the dust with them, slaves as they are!"—had to make up his mind, that poetry,

* There was a Mr. Moore, who died of the cholera, at Ischia, in 1854. It was fortunate he died, or he would most certainly have been turned out.

although very sweet or very fierce, was not always a pass into countries like Naples.

I can faithfully imagine the extra guard that would be mounted along every quay at Naples, if any fat man, of eighty years of age, having the name of William Gladstone, happened to arrive. Although the late chancellor of the exchequer is as well known at Naples as Sir William Temple, yet the name would be enough. This is an age of table-turning and miracles, and William Gladstone might somehow have become corpulent, and grown suddenly to eighty years of age. I doubt if any Gladstone—Charles, Thomas, or George—would be passed.

On entering the Neapolitan dominions by Terracina and Fondi, your name is carefully looked for in the black books; and if a Mr. Smith had ever been a radical writer, all the immense fraternity of that popular name would stand a good chance of exclusion. Luckily, Sydney Smith never indulged in presumptuous remarks about his Majesty of Naples; nor did those talented men of the "Rejected Addresses" ever mention his name—and there are plenty of Smiths on the books of all the hotels.

I am at a loss to imagine how it is that we allow this ignorant tyranny to prevail, if there is such a thing as a commercial treaty. It is perfectly right that the men offending should be kept out; but even the King of Naples, great and powerful as he may be, has no right to exclude all of the same name. But certain it is, that any name being on the forbidden list, although the offender may have been dead half a century, which in Thomas Paine's case would not be overstretched, will exclude the most innocent milksop that ever wore a wide-awake, or cultivated mustachios.

You expect letters—go yourself to the post office—at first sight you will perceive how insignificant is the whole establishment; it will convince you that the Neapolitan *people* are not much addicted to letter-writing. It was often declared that all foreign letters were opened and read before they were ever delivered; and the same scrutiny practised prior to being sent out of the country. I doubt this; if the letters are opened, they are opened most adroitly. I closely examined mine, and I never saw the slightest indication of this sneaking inquisitiveness; but do not imagine that because you have a letter at the post-

office, you will get it—that is a mistake. You *may* get it—and you may wait many a day for it. I attribute this to the negligence and ignorance of the sorters; they hardly know one letter from another, and names beginning with an S or an L are very likely to be mixed together; if a letter is directed to John Snob, Esq., it will go into the E division. A friend of mine, whose name began with a G, was certain a letter was awaiting him—quite in vain he went day after day; at last he began with the letter A, keeping his eye on the letters as they were examined, and his was found in the partition for letter Z. The whole concern is most slovenly managed, and, perhaps, because it is a losing concern to the government. Ladies' maids, and farmers' daughters seldom indulge in epistolary correspondence, and writing is not a necessary part of education. The man from whom I hired my carriages was one far above the general herd in manners and riches; but when I drew up my agreement and asked him to sign it—he modestly excused himself because he could not write—he made a sign of the cross, in which I had more confidence than had he signed his name.

It takes as much time to get a letter from Naples to Palermo by the post, as is required to go to America; in fact, I believe it would get to New York before one written and posted at the same moment would get to Palermo; there are steam-boats running frequently to Palermo—but the mails are not sent by them; there is a post-office on board, and the writer must take his letter on board, if he requires it to go in *one* night; if it is put in the post-office, in the Largo de Castello, it will go round by Reggio and Messina, and be sometimes fifteen days.

Under the colonnade of St. Carlos there are plenty of letter-writers, and the poor shivering devils in winter look the very pictures of despair; occasionally you see an anxious woman getting a petition drawn up, and now and then—but very rarely—a young girl having her thoughts put on paper. Opposite the post-office, sheltered by umbrellas, and having a small rickety table before a much more rickety chair, are plenty of these ecrivans public. I have frequently watched them—for in their neighbourhood Mr. Punch holds his daily exhibitions—but it was marvellous how few were employed; how they

even made enough money to pay the interest on the capital expended in the table, chair, ink, and pens, was beyond my conception; they all appeared to me to write a very large straggling hand—and to be excessively long about it. A French letter-writer would get up twenty love letters, for twenty pretty maids, whilst the Neapolitan would write one; the Frenchman knows exactly what the young lady would say—and throws in a warm sentence or two for his two sous, with the facility and talent of a man who knows the secrets of the female heart. I watched one young girl at Naples, and her bungling amanuensis took half-an-hour, and spoilt three sheets of paper, before the amatory epistle—I will swear it was one, from the girl's blushing—was finished.

The money-changers, like the letter-writers, sit at corners of the streets, and exhibit their bags of copper; this ought to be a thriving business, from the numbers employed in it—but the gain must necessarily be small when the money changed is so insignificant; they all support a large umbrella, which covers themselves and half the table. I always imagined they thought the copper would be

depreciated by the heat of the sun. The affluent profiters by exchange, light or foreign coin, occupy the ground floor of several houses in the Toledo, and are mostly of the tribe of Levy, Benjamin and Company; but neither writers, nor money changers make the show of the vendors of cold water, lemonade, &c.; nor will the ears the most dull of hearing escape the constant cry of "Acquavitare teng'a sambuca fina."* These lemonade stalls are the most picturesque of the Neapolitan outside shows; and there is one in the Largo Saint Maria a Cappella, which afforded me a good view of a Neapolitan fight. I do not pretend to say, if this was a family fray, but the combatants fought with all the fury and rancour of those who had been friends. I never saw a more glorious struggle for love-locks, however uncombed they might have been,—an Irish wake was a joke to this; everybody seemed to be everybody's enemy; broomsticks were flourished; little children bit the ancles of the older ones; every taller woman seemed resolved to save her neighbour the trouble of the general natural avocation connected with the heads of others; and most

* Aquavitare tengo il sambuco fino.

resolutely they endeavoured to scratch out each other's eyes, or somehow disfigure the countenances. The fight would not have been worth the waste of time but for the action and the screaming—not one word of which was intelligible; and strange it was to find in the height of the storm—almost instantaneously—the calm was established, and the combatants satisfied. At last the scene changed to pacific gesticulations and screams discordant; but all hands had enough of the fight; and the women sat down to smooth what hair they had left, some to rub their ancles, and others lick their paws. They are fierce creatures, these Neapolitans, as may be gleaned from their large, dark, fiery eyes; and they seem endowed with masculine strength and courage when they engage in these family feuds.

There is great coquetry in the different head-dresses of the common people, and those a grade or two in advance of that line of life, the manner in which the silk kerchief—or that resembling silk—is tied about the head, is particularly becoming; nor will you want for the article; in the Toledo there are many obambulatory merchants of such wares, crying

out in real Neapolitan, "Mussolana muccatore fine."* I have not the least doubt but the vulgar word, "muckinger," for a pocket-handkerchief, is derived from this "muccatore;" all the young girls covet a silk handkerchief, and it is very becoming to their features.

In summer-time the lower orders seem to live on water-melons, and young urchins may be seen with their faces buried in the fruit, and daubed all over with its contents; the melon costs but a trifle, and is particularly refreshing. The vendors of these articles for consumption by the wealthier, endeavour to untie your purse-strings by assertions generally false; the criers of the articles are loud in their enticements, "Guaglio i che mellon c'è stà zucchero, neve a rinto;"† as for finding the snow within, that is a question of experiment after you have purchased your fruit.

If you have a particular fancy to be robbed, without anything to show in exchange, walk leisurely up the Toledo, or occasionally stop to look into a shop window; if you did pos-

* Mussola Fazzoletti fini.

† "Garzone che mellone! vè è il zucchero e la neve dentro." "Boy, what melons! there is sugar and snow inside."

sess a pocket-handkerchief—and it was a silk one—rely upon it you will not have one by the time you get half way to the Largo Spirito Santo. The minister of finance usually lounged in this street, and he lost seventeen pocket-handkerchiefs in seventeen days; he applied to the minister of police, rather annoyed that *he* should have had so little consideration from those who put their hands in the pockets of the other; the next day the minister of police sent him seventy-two of these articles which had been taken from the light-fingered fraternity, but not one of the seventy-two belonged to the minister. There are plenty of receivers ready to give the thief four carlini, and when the article is washed, it will sell for a piastre.

From the time of my being robbed in St. Peter's—whilst the pope was blessing me and the thief—I had my pockets sewn up, but I must needs exhibit myself one day in a new coat—without this precaution. I was walking along the Chiatamone, towards the Santa Lucia, when I espied a rather well-dressed young lad fix his eyes upon me. I walked on, but fancying I heard a step close behind me, and something touch me, I turned sud-

denly round, and caught the thief by the throat. As anybody is allowed to thrash a Neapolitan, and this is seen every day in the streets, I took the liberty of administering justice myself; the thief took *that* quietly enough, and when I met a sbirro—that is, a thief disguised as a policeman—and in such a dress that no one could doubt his proper avocation, I proposed to give my captive in charge; but I was told he was only a povero diavolo *endeavouring to get his livelihood;* and the thief walked away as disconcerted as honesty. I had a hint that sometimes these blows of a stranger might be paid by a stiletto.

I have seen gentlemen thrash Neapoliton drivers, who did not get out of their way, or perhaps came too nearly between the street and their nobility; nor did the offending coachman dare return the blows, but slunk under his carriage to avoid the whip. And once I saw a soldier, who had been nearly touched—but *not* touched—by the wheels of a public cabriolet, draw his sword and cut at the coachman with the certain intent of murder or maiming; and never did I see any monkey more active in jumping from

a seat than was the coachman; but no one interfered; the man might have been killed a hundred times, if he had had as many lives, and not a soul would have seized the scoundrel who thus used his side-arms, and who ran, sword drawn, in pursuit of the cabriolet. As for the sbirri, they are well-known to be greater thieves than those they catch; and not unfrequently leave a signal to the professional robber, by placing a stone in a particular place, that the thief may safely pursue his patronized profession. I never have heard of house-breaking in Naples, although some, especially in the Chiaja, might be entered without much chance of detection; the Neapolitan is a robber in the small way—without a good chance in a quiet corner occurs, then he does not rest contented with a handkerchief; they always carry knives to enforce their requests.

A man who has travelled through Italy, is generally, by the time he gets to Naples, heartily sick of churches. At Milan, of course the cathedral must be visited; and also the Duomo at Florence; St. Peter's, at Rome; and St. Martino, at Naples. To pass through either place and omit to visit these churches,

would be to exhibit a want of the most common observance; but it is in Rome that one becomes surfeited with the same magnificence so liberally bestowed in all the places of worship in the city of the pope; it generally happens that the traveller, arriving at Naples, has had so much of this kind of sight-seeing, that he ejaculates, "Oh Naples, what can Naples show in churches after Rome! I have seen enough of churches elsewhere." And yet there is no place in Italy wherein there is not something new to be seen; and the churches of San Filippo Neri, San Paolo, and San Giovanni a Carbonara, (this last being a kind of Santa Croce of Florence), will well repay the traveller for the time he bestows upon them. I confess that I almost preferred the three above named to almost any church in any other place; the cathedrals, of course, excepted.

Upon the whole, I do not know a much more pleasant residence in winter than Naples. You will be told that the view is magnificent and the climate exciting; that the meat and vegetables are tasteless and vapid, and that such a thing as a good cook is not in all Italy. But you will find this exaggerated,

and that people live at Naples nearly as well as they do elsewhere; the wines are certainly not to be compared with those of France, and yet he who imbibes in moderation, will not disdain the white Capri, the Falernian, or the Lacryma spumosa. In Naples, very little wine is required—the air itself is of sufficient excitement; and a traveller from France or England, indulging the least above moderation, will soon be convinced that the climate is against all excesses. In Naples, there is always sufficient gaiety to avoid dullness, and there is a kind disposition in the Neapolitans, both in the higher or lower classes, which makes a sojourn amongst this kind and amiable people most delightful.

Being at Naples, of course you have the usual mania for sight-seeing; a guide is of little use. Murray's book, although the English residents at Naples find many faults with it, is quite correct enough to save you the bother of a companion who is ignorant of almost the entire history of that which, like the wild beast exhibitor, he repeats, without any regard to stops; but if you have clambered the Camaldoli, you have yet Vesuvius to mount. The prints of this difficulty, seen

in every shop window in Naples, are not exaggerated; a fat woman, or a fat man, must either be lugged up or carried up, for get up without assistance he most assuredly will not.

The guides are all on the look-out for you at Resina; you may declare you do not want them, and will not have them, but you will be obliged to pay after all, without you are young and active, and resolved to overcome many difficulties. You pass on in your carriage, leaving the guides at Resina; but no sooner have you driven along the road, than these active fellows, with equally active donkeys or ponies, cut through vineyards, scale heights which look like precipices, surmount apparent difficulties, and have gained half an hour upon the carriage; when you arrive at the hermitage, the whole *posse comitatus* will be in readiness to serve you. It will take three hours and a half to get from the Chiaja to this hermitage; and here, as the fatigue is great, donkeys are not to be despised as far as they can go, which is to the foot of the Cone; you will find a sentinel here, what for, excepting to solicit a few grani, I never could understand. I, with two ladies, began the

ascent on foot; long before we had got up fifty feet, the Hungarian beauty was done up, and placed in a chair, with her legs dangling down like Guy Fawkes. The other lady looked at the precipice and sighed; it was enough, another chair was in request; and as I found the guides would haul me up with ropes, and that I paid no more for being carried—so carried I was, and never did I less admire my position.

The difficulty arises from the last eruption, the cinders or the dust of the lava being knee-deep; and out of our whole party, only an Englishman and his French wife, Mr. and Madame Lowe, did the whole distance from the hermitage to the Cone and back on foot.

I have been over many mountains, crossed the Alps and the Apennines on foot; been on the glaciers of Mont Blanc, and toiled on the Mere de Glace; but they are all child's play to Vesuvius: fortunately, like pain, it is short, or it would be unbearable. It is not that the ascent is long, but it is because the lava gives way under the footing, and that the rise is so precipitous: besides which, if you will not take guides, they walk before you, and the whole lava set in motion by them purposely,

makes your footstep the more difficult; the best plan is to be fleeced with a good grace, and let them work for their money.

I never want to be chaired, even at an election, if the peril is only half as great as it looks; but you are well repaid when you have surmounted the difficulty. The sea view extends beyond Terracina; I distinctly saw the hill on which Theodoric's palace stood—the whole of Baja, Ischia, Ponza, Procida, the city of Naples, Caserta, the Campagna Felice, the Abruzzi, Apennines; nothing could well surpass this. There was one ship on the huge waters, it looked not larger than a pin's point in the world; and yet, as it was an English vessel, no doubt the crew thought they were the master of it—it was a mere dot on the waters of life. As I returned home, I said, "Thank God, I have *done* Vesuvius! and if ever they catch me at that again, I am mistaken." But if a desperate youth wants to get into training, let him take an hour's walk up Vesuvius every morning, and he will soon be in order to undergo any fatigue. I believe delicate people had better buy the picture of the ascent and descent, and swear they have *done* it; any-

body can fancy a view, and you can copy a description. If after such fatigue you would sleep well, burn some "polvere di zanzara" in your bed-room, and you will learn how to stupify even a blood-sucking musquito.

I was standing on the mole, admiring an American frigate, which rode proudly at her anchors, in the Bay of Naples, when I remarked a movement of her boats alongside, as if in preparation for some landing of high officials; my curiosity got the better of the heat, and I awaited the show.

No sooner had the boats shoved off, than I saw it was a funeral, from the colours in each boat being half-mast high; I concluded, from the excessive order, the measured stroke of the oar, and the whole pomp and ceremony, it was some unfortunate officer to be buried far away from the shores of his birth. I was scarcely aware that a hearse, or something which was meant to represent one of these carriages, had driven upon the mole, until I heard a little of that unintelligible Neapolitan, which generally heralds a dispute.

In the meantime the boats neared the shore, and the crowd of the curious increased. In the first boat was the coffin, covered with the

American flag, placed athwart the stern-sheets —in this boat there were several officers, and four or five extra men besides the boat's crew; there was a stillness in the manner the oars were dipped in the water—and the boats pulled more in the Spanish style—where, after each stroke, the oars are kept in the position they come out of the water, then, after a lapse of a second or two, the stroke is repeated. On arriving close to the mole, the oars were boated in the most respectful, silent manner. A man may touch his hat, but there is one way of doing it respectfully; and another, which is done as much as to say, "I have touched my hat, but it went especially against my pride so to do;" so, in the boating of the oars, instead of the sudden manner in which they are usually dropped, they were placed without any noise.

Not a word was spoken, the flag was removed, and a neat oaken coffin, with the name of the inmate painted upon it, was taken from the boat, and placed in the hearse. It was the coffin of a common seaman! the officers were sent to do the last honour to their shipmate, and the extra men were the messmates of the deceased; into the carriage these

men—and as many more as they could hold—were placed, the cortége moved slowly on; the officers being in the last carriage.

As the boats, with Jack's usual desire for a little of that poisonous aqua vita, were left in charge of the boat-keepers, I thought I might as well ask some questions relative to this very expensive funeral of a foremast-man. The frigate was the Cumberland; the man had died the day previous, of consumption; and my informant, who seemed to recognize in me one of the salt-water tribe, told me, "they always buried their shipmates on shore when they were near it—that he expected the government paid the expenses—and that, after all, when a man had served them faithfully, they might as well carry him out and bury him decently."

I have seen hundreds of funerals of foremast-men, but I never saw anything to equal the respect and solemnity of this; and I believe, if any captain in her Majesty's navy ordered a hearse and three coaches, he would find it a difficult matter to get the paymaster's accounts passed, whoever that paymaster might be; neither was this man buried in the Campo Santo Vecchio, but in a proper grave,

in the English burial-ground. This poor fellow never dreamt of such honours after his death; and many who order this show and mockery, are even treated more contemptuously than poor, honest Jack.

I was well acquainted with a Neapolitan gentleman, who, certainly, no one would have suspected of looking after honours after his death, however much he sought them when living, for he was very parsimonious, and, I believe, hardly ever dined at his own expense for years; he would walk in the heat rather than pay to save his legs, but he was resolved to be great in death; and this vanity, this "super vacuos honores" of the man, will be better gleaned from his own pen. Thus runs his will, written by himself:

"I die, professing the Roman Catholic and Apostolic religion; in the bosom of which I was born, on the 26th February, 1801, at Naples. I have no relations either in the ascending or descending line; I never married, and was an only child. I die such as I have ever lived, the most faithful, devoted, and attached subject of my august sovereign, Ferdinand II., the model of all virtue; for him I would have shed my blood, or given my for-

tune, had it been required. I have for ever upheld his cause—not from interested motives, but from the purest affection; for I have never solicited either employments or pensions.* I never married, on account of my feeble health, occasioned, perhaps, by the abuse of food, liquors, and medicine, during my youth. I pardon those who have offended, betrayed, deceived, and robbed me; also extend my forgiveness to my old servants, who abstracted six thousand ducats from me. I forgive the ungrateful; and I pray God to pardon all my errors, and admit me into Paradise. I exclude from my inheritance all who are not named herein. I declare I owe no man anything.

"Most faithful and loyal subject, Judge, Decurion, Provincial Councillor, Member of the Chamber of Commerce, Deputy of Public Works, and of the Sanitary Council; Consul-General for the empire of the Brazils, Consul-General of the King of Portugal; Knight of the orders of Francis I., of the Rose, of Christ, St. Silvestre, Aurata Militia, Legion of

* I think Don Carlo's memory, when he wrote this will, had, perhaps, suffered from sickness, and was rather imperfect.

Honour, of Notre Dame de la Concessione de Villa Vicosa, Commander of the order of Christ, Associate of the Institution for the Encouragement and for the Academy of the Fine Arts; Correspondent of Arcadia, Cremona, Tentidio, and of the scientific institutions of St. Petersburg. I institute for my heir," &c., &c.

The will directs that he should be buried "*exposed*," that is, carried *on* the coffin, so that all may see he was not murdered; and this reason was the origin, in days long past, of such revolting exhibitions.

Alas! for the vanity of poor Don Carlo, and all his laborious descriptions of himself, and of his honours, his love of his sovereign, and his disgust of his debtors (some of them in the higher classes), whom he designates as "Gente di mala fede," which does not look like "forgiving the ungrateful;" he died of the enemy he most dreaded, "Cholera;" and although he laboured so hard to have his due reward from his confrati—neither his body nor his flimsy honours were exhibited, but he was consigned, like all other cholera victims, to a hasty and unceremonious grave; the king never cried over his loss, and those

who inherited his vast property, thought him, no doubt, a very excellent man, with great discrimination and judgment. Of all the records of human vanity, I hardly know one which can surpass that of Don Carlo V. The American seaman who died without a will, was far more honoured in his funeral.

# CHAPTER II.

## SICILY.

THERE is a fable which recounts that his Satanic Majesty, after having withdrawn from the earth for many years, in these latter times revisited it. His first visit was to England, which he left instantly, declaring that the industry and improvements visible at every step, convinced him that if Idleness was the parent of Vice, he must go elsewhere for victims.

In Russia there was a great advance, which even the cold of winter had not nipped. In Sweden a faint effort had been made, in spite of its poverty. Throughout all Germany great was the progress; but when the sable king arrived at Rome, and found that in the city of St. Peter the dirt and darkness was as heretofore, he looked at its inhabitants with an

eye of appropriation, and began in his mind to number his subjects. At Naples he was far from being dismayed, for here were idleness, dirt, and degradation enough to scare the virtuous and alarm the industrious; but it was only when his Majesty arrived in Spain that he recognized his former subjects: the Turks, of course, were held in fee-simple; there was not an effort at improvement there, everything went from bad to worse, until the protection of England and France entirely ruined it by it rushing into a war.

How his Satanic Majesty overlooked the Garden of Europe, Sicily, it is difficult to imagine, for any one of less practised eye would at once perceive that if Spain had stood still, Sicily seemed rooted. But this inaction must not be attributed to the mismanagement of its Viceroy; never had any sovereign a better servant than Ferdinand of Naples had in Filanghieri, Prince of Satriano, the governor of Sicily. To a comprehensive mind and vigorous intellect, this prince added a perseverance and activity scarcely paralleled; there was neither cruelty nor vindictiveness in his nature; and whilst he was universally respected even by those whose cause he crushed, his daughter

was recognized as an angel of charity, giving contentment and happiness wherever she appeared. But all the zeal displayed in the cause of improvement was checked by the government of Naples, although Sicily is the greatest gem in the Neapolitan crown. It is not only thoroughly neglected, but a bar is put against *all* ameliorations, all improvements. The Neapolitans call the Sicilians Saracens, or Arabs; and such is the hatred between the Sicilians and the Neapolitans, that, like two silly beauties, they seem to think that what detracts from one, adds to the other.

Who would believe, but those who had lately visited this natural terrestrial paradise, that the far-famed city of Palermo is not yet lit by gas? who would believe, in this otherwise enlightened age, that even carriage-roads are not universal? that inns, that is, houses of resort for travellers, in which travellers can venture to resort, do not exist, or, if existing, are shunned rather than courted? that, as in days gone by, even in that hotbed of revolution and eternal change, Mexico, the distance from village to village is accomplished on the backs of mules, and that until the Prince of Satriano

exhibited the vigour and watchfulness of his government, a musket was more useful than a portmanteau? but so it is in Sicily, excepting as regards the musket. There are but few roads from Palermo, and after the traveller comes to their end, his carriage is almost useless, and mules are his best assistants.

The absence of all improvement may be seen in the state of the square in which stands the palace, the residence of the viceroy; even within the city, progress is not rapid; and I would almost venture to assert, that during the last thirty years not one stone, or not one wheel-barrow weight of gravel has been used to improve the Piazza della Marina.

In my early youth I much frequented Page's Hotel, which stood in this square. I hardly think the house has been painted; and as for the square itself, it requires no very observant eye to perceive that there are no commissioners of roads in Palermo, or any parochial authorities to enforce improvements. The Strada Toledo and Strada Macqueda are exceptions; but most certainly the streets of Pompeii are even now, after the lapse of two thousand years, in far better order than the small streets of Palermo; but nothing can destroy the mag-

nificence of the site of Palermo, which, if it cannot exactly rival that of Naples, is scarcely inferior.

The splendid inn of the Trinacria, under the direction of Signor Ragusa—its position, the view from its magnificent terrace, the comfort, the cleanliness,—was a great relief after the passage in the unfortunate Ercolano, which was destined in her very next voyage to be run down by the Sicilia; and yet there was not much to complain of on board the ill-starred vessel. We were exactly eighteen hours from the time we left Naples until we arrived at Palermo; and the calm, clear April night, the phosphorescent flashing of the sea, the cool, delicious air, kept us from the closeness of the cabin, and recalled in my mind many scenes of my youth, when my home was on these waters.

At daybreak the high land about Palermo was in sight; cold, indeed, must be the man who does not at once acknowledge the beauty of this singularly-gifted island. As the sun rose, the beauties seemed to increase; and when, on rounding the Monte Pellegrino, the bay of Palermo opened to our view, with the city, its churches, and its fantastic back-ground of

mountains, there was a burst of admiration from all who had never visited Sicily before.

We were soon aware that the inconveniences and the annoyances of Naples were patent at Palermo. The police, that dreadful engine of tyranny, were soon aboard: we were mustered, and examined, and questioned, as if we were a cargo of Socialists; the Custom House harpies were as vigilant as if the Ercolano had come from China direct, with a cargo of tea or Mandarins' tails; but then it is but fair to add, that the exacting, the pilfering, and the plundering are as well performed by a Sicilian as by his brother in ingenuity, the Neapolitan.

There was one apparently better-bestowed vagabond than the rest, who assured me of the necessity of my being on my guard; that most of his countrymen were "Bricconi-furfanti," both of which sound more euphonious than thief and rascal, and were given to "rubare i forestieri," but that he, by the blessing of the immaculate Virgin, was free from this primeval sin, and was honesty personified in a true Sicilian: he had said this so often, that he really appeared to believe it. Before I could refuse his services, he had got a boat alongside, and a dozen other fellows, all of his

Ali Baba gang, had commenced seizing our luggage. Quite in vain that best of all, and most vigilant of servants, Lowe, attempted to dispute possession; all he could do was to count the numerous packages, and then sit upon the largest, as if resolved to sink with his charge, or maintain it with his life.

We were placed in another boat to that which conveyed the luggage, and away we went from the harbour to Palermo. On our arrival, my immaculate friend, who had declared he was my "vero amico," became the most extortionate of the whole gang; he had no bowels of compassion at all; he talked of piastres as if they were "grani;" and had I not referred my *friend* to the judgment of Ragusa, I might have been left penniless in the street. One quarter of what he asked was cheerfully accepted, and the whole gang of thieves set out for a jollification; they had made quite enough for the day's recreation, and a Sicilian scarcely looks beyond that.

There is as yet, although Murray promises one, no proper guide-book for Sicily; but there is a living guide, and an honest one, in Signor Ragusa: under his protection and advice, the traveller will be kept in the right course,

and his purse not too voraciously plundered: but although Sicily has ever been esteemed a land overflowing with the gifts of nature, the traveller must not expect to live for nothing.

The Trinacria is by far the best hotel at Palermo; the others—indeed there is but one worthy of being mentioned, the Hotel de France—are very far inferior. We were four masters, with three servants: we occupied the best rooms in the Trinacria, having the terrace exclusively for ourselves; and the following were the charges:—18 carlini for the salon, 8 carlini for each front, and 6 carlini for each back bed-room *per diem*. One piastre each paid for both breakfast and dinner, at the latter of which, a kind of vin ordinaire, by no means bad, was thrown in. There is a fixed charge for the servants, from which Ragusa never varies. There was nothing to complain of; everything was good and clean; but such was the scarcity in Sicily, that the principal comestibles for the table were brought from Naples. It is but just to say, that in all his places of resort, be they where they may, the traveller can scarcely be more comfortable than in the Trinacria; there are few hotels more beautifully situated—the Hotel de Rome

at Naples may be an exception—but the interior, the dirt, and the wretched cookery of the latter, is a drawback against possessing the finest view in Europe.

On my presentation to the Viceroy, which took place the third day after my arrival, I was struck with his resemblance to the late Louis Philippe; he was exactly his height, shape, and make; and the Prince of Satriano, in his kind manner, his affability and courteousness, strongly resembled the unfortunate monarch. No man has had a much harder or more ungrateful task to perform than the Prince of Satriano; to conquer a revolution, and then to govern the conquered—to acquire their esteem—to create order from disorder—to be severe, just, humane—to hold the balance with an iron hand—to turn the idle and dissolute to the paths of employment and rectitude—to suppress all the evils of insurrection, and to enforce tranquillity—require a man such as few monarchs can boast; and yet such is the Prince of Satriano. In spite of all the vituperations which were so lavishly heaped upon him—in spite of the necessary severity which followed the suppression of the Sicilian revolution—you will hear, on all sides,

from either his enemies or his friends, that he was forced to act as he did; that no malignant vengeance followed his success, but that he rather sought, by a firm, just government, to restore the Sicilians to peace and quietude; was merciful where mercy was possible; gave great scope to employment; and, by his constant vigilance and exertion, restored, as far as absolutism can restore, a contentment and security around him.

Very far is it from my feelings to admire tyranny and oppression, such as is whispered in every society to exist in Naples and its miserably-governed dependencies, or to uphold for a second a system which turns the law into a mockery, and makes justice a bye-word and a scorn; nor do I mean to say, that acts much better pardoned were not followed by executions, at which a man born in a free country, and knowing the blessings of such freedom, would not turn from in disgust. The very day after my arrival, I read, placarded in different places at Palermo, the execution of a father and son, condemned for having a musket in their house; and this was more than four years after the revolution was suppressed, and almost forgotten.

As far as a man can be grateful for the kindest and most hospitable reception, I am grateful. No man can more admire the activity, vigilance, benevolence, and justice of the Prince of Satriano than myself. It is impossible not to perceive the prince's endeavours to ameliorate the condition of the poorer classes, and to benefit the country over which he presided, with the improvements of modern days; but all must regret that even he found it requisite to confirm the sentence of a military tribunal, and to have ratified the execution of the harsh and unnecessary sentence.

The poor in Naples are considered, what they certainly have some pretension to be—*vermin*. You may abuse, kick, thrash, horsewhip, or spit upon a poor Neapolitan—and his best plan is to thank your excellency for not being more harsh, or more brutal—but a Sicilian is of better blood; he is far more industrious; he seems to know he has some rights and privileges as a human creature; and the government which may suffice for the one, is insufficient for the other.

In Naples, every man of the lower orders seems professionally a mendicant: at any rate, he never loses the chance of a grani, if, by

soliciting, he can obtain it; but in Palermo, although the city is by no means deficient in beggars, yet they are far less numerous; nor do they thrust their deformities into your face, or mob your carriage, as they do at Naples; but this remark is only applicable to Palermo, for, as we get into the interior, we shall find the beggars of Partenico as clamorous, as numerous, and as energetic as at the railway station of Castellamare.

The viceroy having desired I might be allowed to visit every place within his dominions—having handed me over to the friendship of the director of the interior, and the protection of the director of police—it became my own fault if I did not profit by this kindness. The invitations to the palace were extended to those who travelled with me, although not of my family; his excellency himself suggested our various excursions, and took great care that we were received and instructed by the chiefs of the different departments. I regretted extremely that, after one of our excursions, the prince was obliged to return to Naples, on account of the severe illness of his son.

The streets of the Toledo and Macqueda

present sufficient animation; they cross the whole city as near the centre as possible, and thus make four distinct quarters. The shops are indifferent, and the pickpockets lethargic: there is not much to apprehend from carriages, although very convenient and comfortable public carriages are to be found on various stands. The Rez de Chaussée is entirely devoted to shops; café-*clubs*, in all their multifarious ramifications, from the rich magazin to the low cabaret; and it will be remarked, that although, at times, the crowd is sufficiently dense, ladies of the higher class will seldom, if ever, be seen. The china remains on its costly shelf; the delf and the crockery are more exposed to breakage.

In the Toledo, formerly called La Strada Cassaro, and in the Macqueda, are many churches and palaces; the whole street has an air of richness gradually decreasing. It is like a poor gentleman well dressed: there is the mark of poverty, however clean may be his shirt. The solid stone-work, the varied, rich, and strong balconies, the Spanish style of magnificence, are imposing; but there is squalid wretchedness on the door-steps; and there is that want of *ensemble* which is distinguished

in the truly opulent. Walk from the Porta Felice to the Porta Nuova, that is, from the landing-place to the royal palace, and although you will pass along a splendid street, straight as an arrow, with huge buildings, hospitals, churches, palaces, it will at once strike you "as outside show;" and diverge into the narrower streets—the markets or the Vico—and you will be satisfied that Palermitans are not rich; there are individuals, of course, affluent and respectable,. but the generality are poor and vicious.

The city of Palermo may glorify itself as the birth-place of St. Agatha, distinguished for her birth, beauty, and her sufferings; but her virtue and constancy, in resisting the advances of Quintilian, who roasted her alive on burning coals, to shake her idolatry, or warm her blood, are forgotten in the present generation; and sixteen hundred years (St. Agatha died in 251) obliterates the memory, even of a good example.

From the higher enclosed iron galleries, for they cannot be called balconies, and which belong to the convents, and are approached by a subterraneous passage, the nuns, and those young ladies who seek instruction from

the sisters, are allowed to view all religious processions; and if report is not an arrant liar, the eyes of these fair prisoners are more devoted to other objects than those so familiar to them; and many have paid the heavy penalty of curiosity.

The city of Palermo has about 160,000 inhabitants, and is a little more than a league in circumference; its defences are insignificant, and an enemy would have little to fear, from either the Arenella or the mole on the Monte Pellegrino side, or from St. Erasmus towards the Bagheria. At present there is a strong military force, the expenses for the maintenance of which are levied on the inhabitants. Milan and Palermo are excellent examples of the consequences of unsuccessful but noble revolutions; one city is a desert—the other is impoverished by the tax which nourishes its oppressors.

Lord William Bentinck, in 1812, gave the Sicilians a kind of English constitution, and the country prospered under the liberty it enjoyed. The hundred days—the treaty of Paris—the overthrow of Murat by the Austrians—re-placed Ferdinand on the throne of Naples; then arose again the humbled pride

of the Sicilian nobles, who strove to regain their feudal rights, of which the English constitution had shorn them. The constitution was annulled.

On the 8th of December, 1816, the king took the title of Ferdinand I. of the Two Sicilies, declared Sicily a province of the kingdom; and it was afterwards, by a decree, dated June 1824, incorporated entirely with the kingdom of Naples, and subjected to the same laws. To prosper under such a disaster, after the blessings of liberty, law, and justice, was not very possible or probable.

Sicily, which has had three names, like a child of nobility, "Trinacria" (from its triangular configuration), "Sicania," and "Sicily," has only 1,650,000 inhabitants. In ancient times Syracuse alone had 1,200,000 people, and yet in all Europe there is no country so favoured by Providence as this most beautiful island; whilst an eternal winter may be found on Mount Etna, an eternal spring reigns in the vicinity of Girgente—there is not a richer or more productive soil in the universe, yet not one-fourth of it is cultivated. Here are corn and wine in abundance, here the orange, the fig, the date, the pomegranate, the tamarind, the

chestnut, and every other fruit and vegetable which is used in Europe flourishes, almost spontaneously—and the brighter and richer tints of the flowers, whether wild or cultivated, the stately aloe rising its thirty feet, bursting at its fifth year into blossom, give a beauty to this island seldom found elsewhere.

Then how comes it, with all these advantages, all that is requisite for sustenance, all that God can bestow upon man, that population should decrease? Can it not be traced to the government, who so little exercises its wholesome patronage, that, even in this age, this paradise must be traversed on mules or donkeys? that no facility of communication exists? that no support is given to industry? or no field for enterprize? Even at this blessed moment, when travellers grumble at the slow pace of twenty miles an hour, and sigh for the double speed of express train, it is a fact, that a letter will reach New York from London, sooner than a love-letter, which is unworthy of scrutiny by the police, will arrive by the regular post from Naples to Palermo.

The Prince of Butera at last gave an impulse to the communication with Naples, and,

notwithstanding the certainty of loss where every impediment is given to travellers, started a steamboat, "Il rea Ferdinando," which managed the voyage in twenty-two to twenty-six hours; but the post was not conveyed by this vessel, which went and returned twice a week, displacing "Il Tartaro," a sailing vessel, which, in fair wind and weather, managed to creep across in three days; whilst, under adverse circumstances, the few passengers had the benefit of sea-sickness for ten or fourteen. The facility of conveyance soon increased the travellers, the speculation was deemed a probably advantageous one—and the Neapolitan company, with some unpardonable occasional irregularity, manage the communication between the two capitals in sixteen or eighteen hours, whenever they feel inclined to stand to their word and get up their steam; and that is not always in accordance with their printed promises.

Still, it is a fact, that communication or no communication, abundance, climate, situation, government, population decreases; and if this is attributable to Lord Brougham's reasoning, that slaves always decrease—or to Lord Byron's imagination, that "the prisoned eagle will

not pair," the learned may settle; but it is a fact, an incontrovertible fact, that under every natural advantage, in one of the finest and most genial climates, surrounded by almost spontaneous profusion, the people in the interior are half starved, badly clothed, and depopulate.

But, although the people may fall off, there is one class, sleek and sneaky, which seems to increase, or, at any rate, to maintain their exaggerated numbers. *The monks*. A late account gave the amount of these idlers in the hive of creation at 28,000*—whilst the nuns figured for 18,000. If the King of Naples placed a musket in the hands of all these gentlemen, who are the most profligate of Naples, and the most worthless of Sicily, he might muster an extra army of 40,000 men, and leave plenty of the really religious and excellent prelates of both countries to take care of the souls of his indolent subjects. A very superficial traveller will soon notice the reproaches lavished on these men, for lightness of character, intrigue, parsimony, and *other* vices which are but too common at Naples and Palermo.

* See Karaczay, page 19.

The influence of the climate of Sicily has great repute with the character of the people. The sun, which warms and animates the vegetable buds, rising the sap and hastening the fructification of plants, spreads its powerful influence over animal creation. Here men spring to premature maturity, and the softer sex are budded and blossomed at fourteen; here the moral faculties become more active, the blood more heated, genius more fired, intelligence refined, imagination more ardent, and the passions more violent. The volcano which burns in Etna, is ever in eruption in the inhabitants of Sicily — they are overcharged with combustion, which manifests itself in everlasting fermentation, which rises in passion, and dies in the disease of the "amori salsi." The Sicilian is a contradiction. Here is moral activity, there is physical apathy; here is energy in every sentiment, and lethargy in every action, and even reason is enslaved under the empire of imagination. Here, also, where the passions and feelings are so exalted, religion is more fervent, and crimes more frequent. It is said, Repentance prays with more fervour than Innocence.

In the very height of animation, there is a

laziness of character—the volubility of discourse, by gesticulation, saves the trouble of utterance; a Sicilian by the frown, the elongation of the chin, the contraction of the nostrils, will convey a meaning and hold an animated, silent conversation; the signs become questions and answers, but should words become requisite, then, like the Neapolitan, the fingers, hands, and arms, come into play, and the whole becomes noisy and animated. If kindness and affability be accorded to this people, they must also be known as of harbouring a real Corsican revenge; forgiveness of sins, however zealously they may pray for in themselves, is seldom or ever accorded to an enemy.

The land which teems with flowers, fruits, and weeds, seems also to generate nobility, priests, and vermin. Here is a curious statistical account, of a very few years back; how many more princes, dukes, and barons may have honoured the land since, is unknown. The Duchess of Berri was in her time, according to the "Moniteur," safely delivered of a field-marshal, a genus so rapidly increasing, as even to alarm the Neapolitans. In Sicily there are 127 princes! 78 dukes, 140 mar-

quises, and no man of the herald office has ever attempted to number the counts, barons, or chevaliers—they would be more numerous than the monks, and almost as idle.

One great cause of distress in the interior arises from the former vassals of the nobility having lent their money to their masters; the abolition of the feudal rights engulfed master and man in difficulties, if not in ruin; to remedy a little of this disaster, a law was passed, which empowered the debtor to alienate some of his land to repay his creditor; and this occasioned a greater difficulty, since the poor but emancipated vassal found himself repaid by possession of a piece of land, perhaps far from his home, which he was too poor to cultivate, and unable to let; his master was thus relieved of his obligation, and the landholder was left to starve, or to sell, perhaps to his master, for the smallest sum, what had been given him in consideration of a large debt. The noble debtor took good care to repay his servant by land the furthest from his own residence; how was the poor fellow to travel and to exist in such a banishment?

To a traveller revisiting Sicily, after the lapse of more than a quarter of a century,

and whose recollection was rife of the beauty of the women who inhabited this garden of Eden, the astonishment is great at the falling-off. I remember the Sicilian women as next in beauty to the English and Americans; but now, amidst the lower classes, there is a livid paleness, a sickly, olive complexion, which may be attributed to constant exposure to the sun, dirt, or unwholesome diet. If it be true, as is stated in the "Vestiges of Creation," that bad, unwholesome food renders a people ugly, or that the whole physical powers degenerate by the lack of proper nourishment, indifferent clothing, of neglect of cleanliness, the mystery is solved. Both physical and political evils have contributed to "the prominent jaw and elongated limbs;" but the race of beauty is not entirely extinct; and the sparkling large black eyes, the vivacity, the intelligence, and the Grecian outline of countenance, though very, very rarely, are sometimes seen. The beauty of the Sicilians must be sought for in the higher classes, it is no longer a national badge; it is like the order of merit, often given to those who less deserve it. For years after the English occupation, beauty seemed to thrive; but it has not descended to the next generation; forty

years have nipped it; still, however, here and there, the eye is regaled by the sight of that bright, dark, flashing eye—that vivacity, that animation, which only can be seen in the countenances of southern climates. Then, as to the form and growth, and exuberance, Sicily has lost none of its claim to inhabitants the finest in Europe.

It is much to be regretted that Mahomedan cleanliness, that is, as far as the prophet law of ablution (and a little soap would assist the purification), has certainly decreased since the Saracen occupation; and although these people have the power of procuring water in almost every street, and the supply is excessive, the present generation pass the tall fountain, and grow dirtier at every step. A traveller, to ascertain these facts, must dive into the narrow streets and lanes; there he will be convinced the paviour's rammer has never rattled for centuries, and that the scavengers leave their riches to fructify, as Poulet Thompson said, by their own increase. Any one who has thus risked the chance of vermin and cutaneous disorders, will be satisfied that man, like the rhinoceros, may grow strong and healthy even under a covering of mud.

Nature has been prolific of her bounties in Sicily, for, indepedent of the fertility of this island of Ceres, there are mines of gold, silver, iron, lead, and copper; here, also, are sulphur, alum, nitre, vitriol, quicksilver, saltpetre, and fossil salts; what would not a few millions of English capital and English energy extract from this soil! what untold treasures sleep undisturbed in this island! but the Neapolitan government would, in its wisdom, rather allow the treasures to sleep for ever, than by admitting English companies, run the chance and the danger of another sulphur question. Even the yellow and transparent amber, which is picked up at the mouth of the Giaretta, and all the neighbourhood of Etna, is the result of individual employment, and seems to belong to anybody who will take the trouble of bending his back and elongating his arms.

That which has fallen into English hands, such as the Marsala wine trade, has amply repaid the energy and enterprize of the possessor: two thousand and fifty tons are alone exported to Boston; and it is marvellous the increase and improvement which have followed Mr. Ingham's science and activity. With this exception, everything seems to languish and

linger in Sicily; and as the present king has never visited the island since the last revolution, the money which was spent by the court, the followers, the corps diplomatic, the nobles, and above all, the foreigners, who followed like the tail of a comet, has been withdrawn, and the courtly influence and riches have been bestowed on Ischia, to the great detriment of Palermo.

Stand for a moment in the terrace of the Trinacria: before you is the sea, the open sea, the breezes from which come gratefully cool, and reinvigorate after the warm southerly Sirocco. On the left is the small mole harbour; above it the Monte Pellegrino, at the base of which stands the celebrated Villa Belmonti, latterly inhabited by Lord Shrewsbury, and now awaiting, unfurnished and partially neglected, the offer of one hundred a-year from any man disposed to give it. The sea is dotted with boats, there is a Thun fishery, with all its activity; and perhaps in the bay, more to the right, and in front of the Royal Gardens, there swings at her anchors an American frigate. The American flag is more frequently seen than the English. Brother Jonathan drives a brisk trade with Palermo, and with a government

such as Naples, the best of ambassadors is a line-of-battle ship; there is always some citizen in a row, and to be protected; and the stars and the stripes are now an uncomfortable sight in a Neapolitan telescope. The English flag is so rare, excepting from the peak of a merchantman, that it is almost forgotten. Continue sweeping the sea until Cape Zafarano marks the eastern limit of the bay, and then survey the chain of mountains which begin from the Bagheria, and between two of which, early in the morning, before the sun has increased the haze, Mount Etna, with its eternal snow, is visible; continue the view round the bay until you come to the Marina, the public beautiful sea-skirting walk, and you will admit that, although Naples has a greater extent, and many advantages, Palermo seems worthily to bear the honour of her title, "La Felice." They are both lovely, both beautiful; but with all their charms, they have both some blights; for instance, the Sirocco.

The climate of Sicily, generally speaking, is considered very healthy; but the Sirocco exercises a very detrimental influence, and has a great effect upon the human body. This is a southerly wind, the "Khamsin"

of the desert ; some authors pretend that "the breeze, unhealthy and enervating, is born in the burning sands of the great Lybian Desert, where the sterility occasions a deficiency of oxygen. Notwithstanding the distance it traverses, it sweeps over Sicily, borne onwards by the south-east winds, and spreads over this delightful island, and particularly Palermo, its fatal influence. It paralyses both moral and physical faculties, and produces the same lowering effects as fever." I have seen it carry the dust far away to sea, and I have felt, even under the excitement of sight-seeing, its lowering effect. The inhabitants, by sea-bathing, carefully remaining in doors, and observing a particular diet, ward off some of its effects. Strangers reside too short a period to care much for this unhealthy breeze ; and the upper classes keep their windows closed, and remain in-doors until the wind has passed.

Such is a general outline of Sicily, its health, wealth, and prosperity ; and we will now look into Palermo itself, and its surrounding country.

## CHAPTER III.

### PALERMO.

I HAVE spoken generally of Palermo, its streets, and its inhabitants, but have left its twenty principal churches, its sixty-seven convents for both sexes, its fifteen retreats for women and female children, its four great hospitals, its Monts de Piété, five barracks, two theatres, university, eight public seminaries of education, one public library, and the observatory, which latter forms a part of the royal palace, for future remarks. Here is an ample field for a "Murray's Guide-Book," and plenty of reflection for the religious, charitable, and learned.

The cathedral merits particular attention; it has existed nearly seven hundred years. Santa Rosalia, whose intercession delivered

Palermo from the plague, has this splendid specimen of the Norman Gothic architecture under her especial protection. It must be confessed, although it would be a heresy in Palermo to doubt it, that the bones of Santa Rosalia are as difficult to establish as those of St. Januarius at Naples. This pious, exemplary lady was a princess of the blood-royal, who, when very young, retired from the world and the court of Roger, to lead, as a sober, steady author asserts, "la vie contemplative." She lived in the twelfth century. Five hundred years after this contemplative princess died, some human bones were found in a grotto nearly at the summit of the Monte Pellegrino: there could be no doubt but that these bones were those of the princess. She was known to have followed her contemplative life on the summit of that mountain: nobody knew when she died, or how she died; but here were bones, and they could be nobody else's bones; and, as a proof of it, these sacred relics were brought down that confounded slippery, zig-zag road, in 1624, to Palermo, when the plague was raging. The bones arrived, and the plague ceased. Santa Rosalia was voted the guardian saint of Pa-

lermo, a chapel was built on the Monte Pellegrino, which, of course, takes its modern name from modern pilgrimages (the ancient name was the Mons Eveta); and you may go to-morrow and gaze upon the form and feature of this exemplary young princess, as Tedeschi has sculptured her in marble. The honours and glory of the saint remain: every year, on the 15th July, a regular procession takes place, in spite of the heat and sirocco; and great are the public rejoicings. The bones of saints are wonderfully efficacious in cases of plague. St. Spiridion, after the plague has worn itself out at Corfu, invariably stops it.

It is sincerely to be regretted that Santa Rosalia, who has taken such care of the exterior of the cathedral, has somewhat omitted her duty in regard to the interior; and considering that her faithful votaries, on the day of her fête, light up this vast church with five hundred chandeliers, laden with wax candles, and which throw forth so splendid a brightness, that Brydone, years ago, as is mentioned in his work, was nearly struck with blindness —she might have been more attentive to her duty. I think the generality of protective saints go to sleep whenever a modern artist is

paid to restore the interior of a church; and if there had been any tutelary divinity who protected the gallery at Florence, he would have done a great public service had he turned out the artists who restored the statues; but Santa Rosalia's fête-day has one unfortunate remembrance—the bouquet of the fire-works was the signal for the revolution in 1820.

The interior of the cathedral, although the unity of style is destroyed, is yet rich and splendid: here will be seen pillars of Egyptian granite, Sicilian marbles of great value, whilst the grand altar is resplendent of jasper, agates, and oriental alabaster; there is one pillar of lapis lazuli, of uncommon size, and the whole, although far inferior to many churches of Rome or Naples, is yet well worthy of a careful examination; and which examination will not tend to exalt, in the twenty-eight marble busts which are stuck about the cupola, the reputation of the famous Sicilian sculptor, Ghagini.

When I first visited the Duomo, a musical mass was being performed, and the bishop was in attendance; and although I knew in many places fiddles are used in churches, I confess they never sounded agreeably on my ears; the associating of fiddling and dancing go to-

gether, and prayers and pirouetting should be kept separate, as in the embassy at Paris, where Sunday is devoted to the one, and Monday to the other. An ambassadorial mind is far above all mundane affairs on the Sunday, but the expenses of the Monday will recall him to his mortality. It is well remarked, that all temples dedicated to the Divinity by the ancients, stood apart; they were alone for worship, uncontaminated by the vicinity of buildings for worldly occupations. The progressive state of improvement has done away with such narrow prejudices—a dining-room or a ball-room will do for devotion, dinner, dancing, and desecration.

The Duomo has its sculpture, and Villa Reale, the pupil of Canova, has given in marble the entrauce of the relics (if they are her bones) into Palermo, with our Saviour, at the instigation of the contemplative saint, driving from this Eden war, pestilence, and famine. They have all returned once or twice, notwithstanding the sculpture and the prayers of St. Rosalia. Nor is this splendid cathedral destitute of tombs, of elaborate workmanship, in oriental porphyry or white marble; and the traveller may rub up his historical reminiscences at the

side of the ashes of Roger the King, and many other royal remains, such as Henry VI. and Frederick II., Constance, Queen of Arragon, William, Duke of Athens.

It is said that Ferdinand IV. greatly contributed to the preservation of these tombs. Roger ruled over Sicily for fifty years, and added, by his indomitable courage, to the glory and prosperity of the kingdom. The island passed through the cruel ordeal of war and anarchy during the reign of Ferdinand II.; and although the brigands pillaged the temples, the tomb of Roger was respected. In short, the Duomo, both exterior and interior, will well repay the traveller for the longest hours he devotes to its inspection. It is a curiosity on the outside—it is a Sicilian history within.

This King Roger has his memory preserved in more places than the Duomo, for in the church of St. Simione, or La Martorana, on the right-hand entrance, there is the effigy of the white-bearded Roger, receiving the honour of coronation by the hands of the Saviour. In this church there is much mosaic and some pictures; but the eyes must be good to estimate the value of the Palermitan

painter, Vicenzo-Ainemolo, or to discover the merits of the Madonna of Il Zoppo of Salerno (the painter was lame) of Gangi. There is a mysterious darkness of this church, which dates as far back as 1113—a kind of sombre, religious obscurity, which, however in harmony with the edifice, is a serious obstacle to scrutiny. There is a convent attached to it, the iron gallery of which overlooks the Toledo, is sometimes occupied by those who have devoted themselves to religion, and yet crave after the world.

In every Catholic city, the church of the Jesuits will always be found the richest; and in the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, examine either Naples or Palermo, there will be found no deviation from this rule. However superb may be the church of Jesus, however redundant of sculptures and paintings, the exterior is far from striking; it stands in a small square, and its vicinity is that of the most doubtful; it is approached by narrow streets, and it is only when the portals are passed that the richness is discovered. The music in this church is considered the best in Palermo; but it does not follow that the best is excellent; and this remark may take a wider range than Sicily. I

confess I came out of this church, on Low Sunday, admitting the truth of the remark of an English clergyman who accompanied me—that "it was not worth cutting our own service to come and hear." The whole ornamental part struck me as too heavy—too gorgeous, whilst the congregation seemed all afflicted with colds, and bore out, from their eternal expectorations, the remark of another companion, that "they seemed all to have come from Spithead." But, gorgeous or dirty, it cannot be denied that the pictures and the statues have some pretension to admiration; and the chapels, which are in the naves, or the grand altar, with its exquisite marble balustrade, cannot be passed unnoticed.

But throughout all Italy, the churches from first being the objects of sight-seers, gradually diminish in interest; almost the whole are more or less alike; and whether you see the descent from the Cross in the church of the Santa Zita—and the heads of this picture are of rare finish—or if your eyes are fixed on the dying Madeline, by Novelli, in the same church, you feel that a hundred times before you have seen the same faces and the same agony; a remark which may extend to the

picture of the Virgin, in the Chiesa della Olivella, which is *said* to be the work of Raphael. But the pale face of the Madeline of Novelli, her eyes, still the eyes of youth, gradually expiring, the hope, and yet the pain of the last struggle, are admirably contrasted with the serenity of the Angel who is to herald her to Paradise, and rescue her from this world of misfortunes and troubles. This picture has been justly admired, and merits the greatest attention.

From the churches, in which the traveller more remarks the riches of mosaic, the marble granite or porphyry pillars, the beautiful pictures, or the speaking statues, than the pious devotion, the earnest prayer, or solemn exhortation, let us turn to other sights and other scenes, remarking only, that if the shrines of the saints with their useless ornaments, their virgins with jewels, their decorated altars, were relieved of their useless riches, and those riches turned to alleviate the sufferings of the living by the endowment of hospitals and shelters for the poor and distressed, the saints, martyrs, and virgins might be just as efficaciously adored, and their votaries as well satisfied; Carlo Borromeo might, from his silver

chapel and gem-adorned skull and eyes, relieve the necessities and supply the wants of half Palermo, and be just as much a saint, and his old bones work just as many miracles as they do now. There is something very absurd in dressing out a skeleton in jewels, or spoiling a fine statue by crowning it with gems; besides, many of these saints, when living, delighted in relieving the poor, and abstaining from all worldly splendour. It is rather too bad in the saint's admirers, to make him do that in his silver coffin which he never did in his wooden shoes.

When the King frequented Palermo, it was quite requisite he should have a palace; indeed, his Majesty of the Two Sicilies seems to have nearly as many palaces as prisons; but this at Palermo, since Naples has become the capital, is only in name a royal palace. Its principal rooms are deserted, although furnished—the Viceroy occupies other than the royal apartments; and neither the exterior nor interior gives the slightest idea of the "Divinity which does hedge a king." It is well situated, on the very extremity of the town, in a spacious square, near the Porta Nuova, and this square is in as miserable a state as negli-

gence can make it. Martial music may still be heard in it, soldiers still parade it, and cannon, the artillery of the state, stand in front of it; but as to its bastions and mimic fortifications, it is below contempt. The interior, the great court, is a square, with a large gallery leading to the various apartments, and no cocks and hens ever roosted in such holes as do the director of police and his inferior myrmidons. Heavens! what stairs to mount! what passages to thread! what dirt to encounter, before the inquirer after the prefect's health can be satisfied; guards here, guards there, soldiers everywhere, until it becomes a doubt why the prefect was not lodged in the observatory, where he could at once consult the heavenly bodies, overlook the madhouse, and rejoice over the rich landscape without, or the noise and the safety within the gates. I rather suspected I was getting into the vicinity of the maids' dormitory, from the dirty linen and rags which everywhere met my eye and impeded my march; but after turning and twisting through the divers ins and outs, I bundled over a dirty-looking she domestic, and was made aware that, although the prefect was not at home, this was his

home. I can safely say, he is the worst lodged absolutely-necessary official I ever knew in my travels, and most travellers become somewhat acquainted on the continent with the police. If the Viceroy was to inhabit the royal apartments, and the Prefect of Police was debased and lowered to his, both would gain not only in comfort, but in necessary respect. Sir Thomas Maitland, commonly called King Tom, was the only man I ever knew who could walk about in an old coat and bad hat, and yet *look* like "*His Excellency.*"

Within the square of the palace is a church, the architecture of which is a jumble of the gothic and Greek, and a precious monument of the transition from one barbarous age into another, if possible, more barbarous. This remnant of curiosity was built by Roger in 1129; and beneath it, in the vault, is another chapel, which tradition assigns as the place of concealment of the Christians during their persecution.

There is something very singular, though certainly not elegant, in the interior of the church — masses of porphyry, alabaster, and marble are jumbled together. The arabesque paintings on the walls are heavy, without taste

and without style, whilst the gigantic mosaic work is calculated to distress rather than to gladden the eye; it is another of those temples where quantity is more estimated than quality.

If any man wants to be especially disgusted, he can visit the Vicaria, or Hall of Justice. In this building are the prisons; it might be supposed that having the prisoners and the judges so near together, that neither party would keep the other long waiting; but many a man has languished in this dreary abode, where the guiltless and guilty are placed together, and apparently as much punishment inflicted on the untried as on the condemned. When the reforming besom comes into operation, I sincerely trust it will be a strong hand which flourishes the broom.

The administration of the law, its cruelties, and its injustice being the same in Palermo as at Naples, it would be a repetition to remark upon it here; but of all dirty, unhealthy, lousy, disgraceful places, a prison in Rome or in Naples may set at defiance all Europe and South America together; it is the last thing that ever occurs to the authorities to give the prisoners a chance of escape by any sanitary observances; the faster they die, the least

trouble is there for the government or the judges.

I soon got tired of visiting the living in their tombs, for years and years may elapse before a prisoner gets released, and either is liberated by death or the judges; so I drove to the Capuchin convent, which is not far distant from the town, in the catacombs of which are preserved a few thousand of the dead, and from the prison of which there is very little chance of escape.

It has been erroneously supposed by some authors, that the air, like the air at Bonn, on the Rhine, has the property of preserving the dead for hundreds of years. The Sicilians do not trust to the air, although that and daylight are fairly admitted into this strange and marvellous resting-place of the bodies defunct; but all bodies destined to be here placed and preserved, are baked. Here they lie by thousands, one over the other, like bed-places in a steam-boat, saving where, dangling from a loftier niche, swings the hideous spectacle, in its dark dress, of some monk or nobleman, who has a right to his position, or pays for it in this unearthly cemetery.

The sombre staircase which leads to these

corridors is as often trodden by the curious as by the religious; the dead, in all their skeleton horror, are here made the pastime more than objects of serious reflection; the curious position of one, or the gaudy dress of the other, seems entirely to banish those fearful thoughts which ever rise in the presence of the dead. There was with me, besides ladies, a clergyman, and he seemed more horror-stricken in this charnel-house, not with awe arising from the abode of death in its mimicry of life, but from the hideous, grinning, eyeless spectres, which seemed, with their skeleton claws, to welcome us to the spot. "I shall be sick for a fortnight," said he; "of all horrible sights, this is the most horrible." I was of a very different opinion. It is true, the sight is not pleasurable, but it excited in me feelings which I cannot explain, and which enabled me to wander amongst the dead without the slightest awe or apprehension.

Many years ago, when I visited the place, I had actually selected a niche, and ascertained that I could stand, or swing rather, conveniently in it.

Look at that horrible phantom, the hair still hanging from its eyeless skull, the teeth

are still white, the tanned flesh yet clings in wrinkled decay as cheeks, the lips are perfect, and from the mouth the tongue is protruding as if in mockery; there dangles the skeleton arms, whilst the long lank fingers, almost entirely bare of flesh, peep from below the dark sleeve—that hideous skeleton has swung there for one hundred years, and even now, the likeness of what it must have been is plainly perceptible. Now turn to this more natural position of the dead—here is a child, she could not have numbered ten short years; on her skull, for she has been but badly preserved, is the white crown, the last compliment of the living to those who die virgins. It is dressed in all the care and all the pride of human vanity and riches; the white satin robe and shoes, the silk stockings, are fresh and glossy, whilst looseness betrays the mouldering of the flesh, and the lank bone marks the skeleton which is thus bedizened; the whole face is gone, there is nothing but the eyeless socket and the toothless jaw, and yet to the scalp there yet clings some remnants of the dark hair which covered it: the body is recumbent, a pillow supports the head—she is dressed as if for a *fête*, and her hands, care-

fully gloved, hold imitation flowers—everything looks familiar to the eye, but that fleshless, eyeless skull. Everything has survived but the body, and not even a maternal eye could discover the slightest similarity of form or face.

Look, there is another, the features complete, the hair *dressed*, a liveliness on the lips; the mouth partially open, where the white teeth, her pride, were visible. She was of mature age, and wore the virgin crown, whilst from her neck fell ornaments, and in her bosom rests some flowers; there was actually some symptom of life in this corpse, and an expression of the countenance which divested death of its terrors. The name and age of every one marks who they were, and when they died; some retain the flesh for years, others moulder quickly—it by no means follows that the one which looks most natural is the last comer; and here, if any truth dwells upon the lips of the custodi, rest in the Catacombs of the Cappuccioni nearly 4,000 people, labelled, and packed, as one of the servants remarked, "like wine in binns."

Nor, in spite of the clergyman's remark, was the smell offensive; but it is a strange

sight, which does not rest upon the memory like the features of recent death; the continued variation, perhaps, fortunately erases the remembrance of any particular horror; nor should I have been so impressed with the features of the first described, if I had not been roused to closer observation by the remark I heard made, "That it looks like a debtor laughing at his creditor as he cheated him in his debt, by the greater debt of nature."

Whatever awe or solemnity we experienced at our first entrance, it soon wore off. The custodi walked amongst his charge as if he were familiar with the whole of them. There is a Tunisian pacha who turned Christian, and an Austrian colonel who died in 1823, amongst the strange lugubrious group, —although here and there, as the dry skin draws aside the mouth, there is a hideous grimace, a death-mockery of a laugh, which startles the most solemn observer, and relieves him of his gloomy thoughts.

I am very far from the opinion of Karaczay, who remarks, "that in this temple the thought of death becomes grand and terrible, and seizes upon the heart, impressing upon it the sensa-

tion of fear:" neither am I singular in my opposition; for not one of our party, and there were nervous ladies who would have fainted at the sudden sight of a corpse, evinced the slightest apprehension, although the clergyman was fierce in his disgust during the hour we spent amongst the dead. On the contrary, it seemed to me to rob death of half its terrors; for it is when an object once known or beloved is shut out from our sight for ever—when the cold, damp earth closes over it, when it is nailed in its last resting-place, that an awful fear invades the boldest; there is a certain throb which beats audibly at our hearts, when a shipmate, wrapped in his hammock, is committed to the deep, and the inanimate mass, growing larger and larger as it sinks, at last suddenly vanishes for ever.

It is true, the initiation into the awful mysteries of the sepulchre, where the dead of half a century still wear their features, is prejudicial to the thought of eternity; and if this were not the case, the traveller would walk in silence and in awe through these long corridors of the dead, instead of frequently remarking to his companions the expressive features, or the imaginative smile of the

corpse. Hamlet's short sermon on the skull, is nothing to what the commonest mind might extemporise here. The whole form, nay, feature of that object of love and admiration, has ceased to charm, and now disgusts, and warns us more forcibly than words, that we must soon shake off this mortal coil, and become as hideous, if thus preserved, or mere dust and bones, if rotting in a silver sepulchre.

But the minds of men are variously constructed, and what to one is a silent horror, to another is a subject of rejoicing; thus on the 2nd of November, a day by the Catholic church dedicated to the dead, many of these baked corpses are dressed in all the world's vanities of dress, and the dark robe which hangs loosely from the shoulders of a skeleton, may be removed for the day, and be replaced by an uniform. Mothers and fathers, husbands or wives, brothers or sisters, or what sometimes outlives even death, the real lover, the warm, the constant, affectionate heart, still looks and thinks over the gradually decreasing substance of what once lived, and moved, and had its being. On this day rich presents and offerings are brought to the convent. It is a mode of sepulchre much coveted by the rich and great, and

which insures to them a longer remembrance than the "lapidary's scrawl or undertaker's bill;" such is human vanity, and thus is it flattered even after death. To "lie like an epitaph," is a proverb; who has read the village poet's emanation, and failed to find that it recorded the certainty of eternal bliss? or the Christian virtues, honour, probity, truth, love, and affection of those who, when alive, might have been visited by the constable, or narrowly escaped the more lasting truth of the Newgate Calendar? We are all saints when we are dead, and that is some consolation to the living.

It was a change for the better, even to see the ragged, squalid beggars, who were awaiting our return from the catacombs, although some of them looked not a jot more inviting than the baked corpses below; but a visit to the church of St. Maria Nuova, with the fresh air and lively scenery, soon changed the current of our ideas, and made us rejoice in the blessings of the living.

There is cruelty enough in this world, heaven knows! it is some satisfaction to find it mitigated or abolished even amongst mad

people, and much praise is due to the Neapolitan government on this head.

Over the entrance of the Casa Reale dei Matti, hang the chains formerly used upon the poor inmates; but they are exhibited, not as the sign of a prison-house, but rather as a rebuke of a system now happily abolished.

The royal mad-house is more lenient to its prisoners than the political prisons of Ischia or Nisida.

The first sight which strikes the stranger, is the fresco paintings on the walls; and the first intimation of the reserve necessary to be observed was in the remark of the guide, who was a man high in authority, that such paintings were executed by the "*ammalati;*" the word *matto* or *pazzo* never fell from his lips once, nor did they from mine. It showed how carefully kindness is extended, when the words which might awaken a disagreeable thought in the patients are so carefully prohibited.

An officious-looking, consequential man, now stepped forward, as if he were the master of the ceremonies by right of office, and directed our attention to the paintings on the walls, and in a manner which induced me to

ask "if he were a patient?" There was a look which conveyed the extent of the meaning as I received the answer, "Sono tutti *ammalati* qui;" and, therefore, I became prepared to measure my questions with discretion, as we were made over to this consequential gentleman, who was instructed to shew us over the premises.

Everything is well and carefully arranged, and although not so clean as in Bedlam, was far from meriting censure; the patients seemed to come and go here and there without any restraint from keepers, and all, excepting one, seemed most happy and contented. If we happened to meet any as we passed from room to room, there was a degree of civility, even elegance, in the obliging manner in which they stood aside or addressed some words of courtesy; in fact, I felt under the impression, that the inmates here consider all people under the canopy of heaven as belonging to the Casa Reale dei Matti, whilst *they* were destined to assuage the misery of madness. But there was one terrible object, to which they might have extended their attention; this was a poor fellow hopelessly mad, who rolled himself up in a sack, and laid down in one un-

ceasing, immoveable position all day: not the least portion of his person was visible; and as the apparently inanimate lump was motionless, I asked our guide "what *it* was?" "Ammalato, Signore—poverino e molto ammalato." The others came and went, stepped over him, but never seemed to give a look beyond that to guide their steps.

There is a garden belonging to this Casa Reale, under the care of a gardener, who is one of the patients. Directly he saw the ladies, he immediately began to collect a nosegay or two, which he offered as if the garden belonged to him, and this was his welcome. The walks were in good order, and the gardener was most attentive to his flower-beds. To this part of the establishment only a few of the patients were admitted; there are courtyards for the rest.

The consequential guide, after making some remarks to the gardener in a tone of authority, led us to the further extremity, which terminates in a wall; and here, in a bower, to shelter him from the sun, was a priest kneeling on a chair, and uttering his devotions with a rapidity quite marvellous. We stood quiet for some time, watching this happy and

contented being—he seemed wrapped in devotion, and obtaining from his prayers the promises of eternal happiness. I never saw a madman whom I envied before. The world, with all its envies, jealousies, its riches, wants, poverties, miseries, and disappointments, seemed banished entirely from his mind; his face was close to the wall, his hands meekly folded over his breast, his eyes beaming with delight, and his countenance was expressive of contentment; the bower seemed reserved for him—or he had taken possession of it, and no one molested him in his acquisition; what was gold, or silver, or glittering honours to him? his entire world was in his bower, his thoughts concentrated in his prayers; rain or wind, scorching sun or weakening sirocco, the dawn of day saw him in his bower; and the last rays of the light saw him in his way to his bed—they fed him there. There was water to cool his parched lips, but on he went praying, and only varied the posture by sometimes looking at his book, which, having consulted, he replaced on his chair.

Very far was it from my intention to have broken through his voluble prayers, but the

consequential guide thought that some worldly civilities should be extended to their excellencies, who honoured the Padre with this visit, and he interrupted the priest by saying, with great respect, "Holy father, you have not seen those who have come far to visit you." The priest instantly stood upright before us; he bowed with a courtesy which betokened that he was not unaccustomed to the world's habits; he enquired, with a paternal regard, concerning our families, as if he had long been acquainted with us; desired we would enjoy the garden; and as I bade him adieu, he turned again to the hot wall, assumed his former posture, and recommenced his prayers. Although we stopped for a moment or two, he took no further notice of us; he was wrapped in his devotions, and the world was in his bower.

"He is happy," I remarked to the guide.

"He talks too much," was the reply.

"There is a curiosity," said the guide, as he pointed to a military-looking man, who was pacing up and down a raised terrace, with a summer-house at its end. "If the priest talks all day, this man walks all day;

and in proportion as the one is loquacious, the other is taciturn—he will not speak to any one; he walks—and walks—and walks —until Francesco, the gardener, has to roll out his footsteps; he cannot bear the sight of anybody, and he will rush into the summer-house to hide himself, although it is as open as day, rather than meet even the gardener."

As we were advancing towards the unhappy object, I caught [hold of the guide, and told him resolutely, "that we would not disturb him."

"He is of a high family, and ought to know better manners; *I* speak to all who come," said the guide; "what right has he to be so uncivil? why, even the priest left off praying to say, 'Bon giorno, Signori.'"

It was very strange, that soldier's measured step, and hot as was the day, he went at quick time; no armadillo ever seemed endued with more power or inclination of motion; his hands were clasped, his eyes fixed on the ground, and walk—walk—walk—he did without interruption; he might have done for the Wandering Jew, as he seemed proof against fatigue.

As I saw our ammalato guide was a little disposed to disturb the ceaseless and innocent occupation of this unfortunate gentleman, I asked at what time the ammalati dined; and very fortunately it was on or about the exact hour; so I turned short round, and *desired* to be conducted to the apartment.

We arrived at the exact moment, and took our seats at a table where the patients were of a quiet, orderly disposition. All the cooks but the *chef* are insane, all the servants are insane, and even those who seemed in some authority were also of the same class; but everything was conducted in the most orderly manner. There were two or three rooms filled with the inmates of the establishment—they laughed, and talked, and seemed uncommonly happy; and it was only in the greedy manner of eating, and the wild eye, as it fell on the ladies, that insanity could have been suspected.

I had a particular desire to see the women who were inmates of this establishment, and we were led to a kind of gallery which overlooks the court-yard, round which are the rooms for the females; there was no doubt of their vicinity before we got to the gallery, for

there was a row, and a wrangle, a chattering, and a screaming, as if all the parrots of the Zoological Gardens had set to work to out-talk each other; and as they rushed across the yard with their long hair dishevelled, their arms extended, and their dresses by no means untorn, they looked more like Hecates in a storm than human beings. I was very happy to find all the party beyond their reach, for when they espied us they set up a howl, and poured forth such a torrent of indecent abuse, that I was glad enough to retire, and congratulated myself that the ladies were not very conversant in the language. The Italian may be the "lingua d'amore," but it has many expressions which are anything but euphonious, even from the lips of the softer sex.

The greatest credit is due to those who conduct this asylum for the alleviation of the most dreadful of mortal maladies. I never saw greater kindness, or greater patience exhibited; and so uniformly alike did all appear, that I remarked that I had not been able to discover one keeper. I offered our consequential little man in authority some gratuity, which he refused with a sensitiveness worthy

of a man occupying his position; he asked for a pinch of snuff, and it was the first time I ever regretted I had never dealt in that dirt; he saw us to our carriage, assisted us in, and looking about him without exhibiting the slightest desire to rush again into the world, he bowed, and re-entered the Casa Reale. I often have thought that I must have been imposed upon, and that the Master of the Ceremonies was not of the "ammalati."

With the exception of the man in the sack, and the officer, all these insane people seemed excessively happy—free from all care and vexation; most of them in the blessed belief that they had large accounts at their bankers, could pay off an English national debt, were monarchs, or ministers, artists of high repute, and persons to whom the world bowed, and who they treated as domestics. Not one of them was physicked down to poverty and reality; and they are much more contented than ever they would be, if they were restored to reason, and the cold blight of worldly malevolence; thus they will go on, until the grave closes over their addled brains.

The Neapolitan government seem convinced that the nation is mad, and therefore legislate

for every one in the mild sway of their mad-houses. At Aversa, near Naples, there is another asylum, on the same footing as the Casa Reale—and every writer has done ample justice to the Christian lenity of these institutions; but whilst much commendation is expressed in this respect, the severest censure might, and ought to be passed on the prisons, which seem a kind of preparatory scourge to drive people into that state, when the comforts of the Casa Reale may somewhat recompense the unfortunate victims for the sufferings which have occasioned their madness. Every nation, more or less, takes a just pride in the humanity shewn to their poor afflicted subjects; but I confess I was little prepared for the assertion of a high official authority in France, that the finest mad establishment in the whole of Europe was at Charenton; that Bedlam was very inferior to this, or many German refuges for maniacs; and that the Casa Reale, and the Hospital, at Aversa, were both far before the English establishment. To be sure, we are always told that the French are the most civilized people of the globe; that all inventions emanate from the fecundity of Gallic brains; and that the English are dull

of imagination—but great adepts at pilfering the ideas of other nations. I more than once ventured on speculations in French patents, and when they were brought to England, they were found to be at least of ten years' residence, to have originated here, and to have been pilfered in France; one in particular, the supposed offspring of the brain of one Testud de Beauregard, long since fallen into the obscurity he merits, of generating steam from water in a spheroidal state, and which half the French newspaper writers cried up as the consummation of French science, was, years and years ago, the property of the brains of Mr. Perkins; and thus it is throughout all France, they have talked themselves into the belief that they are the most civilized and *finest* nation of the globe; and when the "Moniteur" adds, that in conjunction with England they are fighting for civilization and *freedom*, they actually believe it—they never look at home. Neapolitans might as well talk in the same strain, if they, like Piedmont, are rash enough to join in the war, and declare *they* go forth to fight for civilization and freedom. Voltaire called the world a moun-

tain of mud—a mountain of humbug would be a far better name. In spite of the French gentleman's assertion, Bedlam or Hanwell might defy the scrutiny of any person of any country.

## CHAPTER IV.

### SANTA ROSALIA.

It was on the 22nd April, that I resolved to pay my respects to the statue of Santa Rosalia, which stands upon the high and beetling cliff beyond the Monte Pellegrino; the morning was deliciously cool, the water hardly crisped by the slightest breeze, and the atmosphere as clear as the Italian skies. I crossed the small part of the bay, and landed near the foot of the road; there is some distance to walk before you arrive at the way constructed on arches, and which, seen from afar, gives the idea of an aqueduct. The harbour presented a busy scene, the government steam-boats had mustered strong, and there was more bustle and animation than I had previously observed; but on the shore the idle boys seemed at their

usual avocation, gambling; the bronzed boatmen lay stretched in their boats, apparently careless of their business, some hideous bipeds called, par complaisance, women, were, as usual, wrangling and gesticulating, and a mass of soldiers with the eternal cigars, stood carelessly observing the dispute. There is a hot dustiness around the bay and near the harbour, and those who wish to escape the perfume of either garlic, or stale fishes, had better mend their way.

On leaving the shore, the heat of the sun became more powerful. The month of April is reckoned rather far advanced for visiting Sicily; May becomes unpleasantly hot, and as for June and a sirocco to assist it, that is a punishment which only the merchant, tied and bound in the web of affairs, can be expected to bear. Money-spinning defies even a sirocco or a pestilence. Of all the disagreeable roads, none is more disagreeable than this zig-zag which leads to the summit of the Pellegrino. It is far better to avoid the first three lines of arches, by taking a narrow path which those who frequent this mountain have made beneath; it is, of course, a sharper ascent, but you walk on ground, and not on

hard, round, slippery stones, over which those who are imprudent enough to have nails in their shoes, will find the ascent difficult and the descent dangerous. Those who have seen midshipmen in a boat, pulling themselves any long distance without any one to command them—in short, felicity-hunting—may have remarked how constantly they "lay on their oars," and look at the distant place they have to reach. The traveller in very sultry weather, with his coat on his arm, his neckerchief untied, and his handkerchief turned into a mop, continually stops, looks back to see how much of his labour he has overcome, and gives a very heavy sigh, as he surveys that he has yet to overcome, nay, very often sits down, and feels much inclined to give it up.

A sailor being in a boat rowed by Spaniards, was amused by the conversation of the boatmen, who, becoming warm in their arguments, but lax in their exertions, at last fairly laid upon their oars. Jack could only make out in the vehemence of the discussion, "si, signor—no, signor," which continued, notwithstanding the boat was drifting out to sea. Observing the discussion had more charms than the labour, Jack cut short the argument thus: "Halloa,

you sirs! si, signor, and no, signor! who is to pull the boat on shore?" and those who sit down to look back and sigh, as they look forward, had better remember the anecdote.

I aver without a blush, that more than once I wished this Mons Eveta, this mountain celebrated in the Punic wars, and its impregnable position, where the Carthaginians entrenched themselves, had been a sight *done*, for the hour and a quarter, which is a short time to finish the walk even to the Plateau, will not be found one of the most agreeable in life; but then I had the remembrance of the royal saint and her contemplative life to cheer me. I plucked up courage, I did not require "warmth," and continued to the grotto, in which the credulous are informed this pious and exemplary lady resided. I should be very sorry to exchange a palace for such a niche in a rock; there is a small kind of belvedere on the left, before you arrive at this grotto; and it is quite excusable, as the principal heavy work is done, to repose here a few minutes, and cast your eyes over the valley below.

The attention will be riveted on the palace of the Favorita, its little bell parasols, and dingle dangles—for this summer palace is built



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in the Chinese fashion outside; but the interior, although it still affects this oriental garb, has its walls covered with the multitudinous holy virgins and children, which seem the staple commodity of Italian painters and engravers; but the virgins do not enjoy entire possession of the royal walls, for English prints of all sorts and conditions are interspersed with the holy family, and make a very ridiculous contrast. We may see more of the palace hereafter.

Look at the little village of Carini; has this pretty and delightfully placed village never produced a meteor which should dazzle the world? This is the ancient Hyccara, the birthplace of her, who, according to Byron and others, created an amatory revolution among the "Attic Beaux."* Yes, this little cluster of white houses stand upon the site of Hyccara, where Lais was born; she was made captive during the expedition of Nicias, and taken to Athens.

The philosophers had eyes for beauty; there is no woman who does not enjoy her conquest over the wise and the great, more than over the young, the frivolous, or even the hand-

* "And envy Lais all her Attic Beaux."

*Byron's British Bards.*

some; it is a great victory for the weak to make the learned crouch at their feet. The charms of Lais soon rendered her celebrated; so young was she when she arrived at Corinth, that biographers have rocked her cradle in that city; but Sicily, that island of loveliness, was the place of her birth. Lais was no insipid beauty, no flower without perfume; she was engaging, witty, beautiful, graceful, voluptuous, and the sands of Pactolus could scarcely have rivalled the riches which were showered upon her. Aristippus yielded to her charms, and knowing his weakness, disavowed it. "I possess her," said fallen Philosophy, "but she does not possess me." When ten thousand drachmas was the price she put upon her charms, Demosthenes pleaded in vain for a reduction; he, mortified that he could not afford such lavish gifts, veiled his weakness in his eloquence, "I cannot buy so dear a repentance;" a splendid instance how man will endeavour to commit an error, and being too poor to succeed, endeavours to make a virtue of a necessity. Why, what weak and miserable beings we all are; even Diogenes, who groped about with his lanthorn to find an honest man, could not bear the brightness of the eyes of

Lais. "In spite of his great name, and pretended austerity," said Lais, "he is within my grasp, as others are."

The most fortunate are discontented with their fortune; not all the wealth, not all the power she exercised, could shield and protect the heart of Lais. She became enamoured of one only possessed of youth and beauty, followed him to Thessaly, his country, and was assassinated by her own sex, who were jealous of her charms, her grace, her power.

Now after a hot walk there is some gratification in a quiet seat in this Belvedere, with a cool breeze to reinvigorate the traveller, who rubs up his historical reminiscences, and looks down upon the fertile valley below; but if he gets very poetical and excited, recalling to his mind that from this vicinity Zeuxis selected the three most beautiful women of Europe to mould into his Venus, and with his imagination inflamed with something celestial in the Sicilian graces, he happens to turn round and sees one of the miserable, dirty, ugly beggars, who not unfrequently are soliciting "la picola moneta," he had better pocket his poetry, unpocket his grani, and do as I shall do, continue my narrative and my walk.

Where Santa Rosalia led her contemplative life, cows and cattle now ruminate also; and a very poor pasture they have of it. I have no doubt Santa Rosalia was starved, and most of the ruminating tribe seemed inclined to follow the example: they were even in life walking skeletons.

The Telegraph still looks a long way above you, and there you positively must go; it is pretty certain that the sun will be high, and the perspiration profuse. Is it not marvellous, is it not almost incredible, that although for the last one hundred years men have daily come and gone to and from this Telegraph, the mountain side, on the summit of which it stands, being rocky, steep, and slippery, and hard of ascent, that no path, no steps exist, although every rock offers the material which a week's labour might perfect? I doubt if any two guides ever take the same track. Oh, but this *is* a severe pull, and a most disagreeable, fagging one; and it might be made so easy, that the Governor of Sicily would be tempted to go to the summit, and look over half of his dominions. I gave a considerable sigh when, as I left the last step of the ladder to get on the roof of the Telegraph-house, my

clamber to heaven was *done ;* my companion, a young, spicy, agreeable nobleman, threw himself on the roof, or rather the flat leads, and before he enjoyed the view, fell asleep.

It has been found in the Crimean expedition, especially amongst the French, that fatigue is better borne by those of a *certain* age,—and I am afraid no one will doubt the certainty of mine, who looks at me,—than by the young who are just bursting into manhood. A boxer is not worth much after six-and-twenty, and Lais's Thessalian was under thirty ; yet, in spite of all authorities, I maintain that a man of forty, in sound health, who can say,

> "In my youth I never did apply
> Hot and rebellious liquors to my blood;
> Nor did I with unbashful forehead woo
> The means of weakness and debility,"

will walk over the mountains, stand starvation, labour, damp, cold, and privation much better than pampered youth, however fresh and vigorous it may appear.

It is a glorious sight from the summit of the Monte Pellegrino ; what little cockle-shells the largest ships appear! On these lofty

eminences I always recall the lines of Campbell, without going quite so far, though I have been there, for the position :

"Now on Atlantic waves he rides afar,
Where Andes, giant of the Western star,
With meteor standard to the breeze unfurled,
Looks from his throne of state o'er half the world ;"

and even from the Telegraph one seems to look down on "all creation," as the Americans would say.

The haze to the eastward, and the dust raised by the Sirocco, shut out Mount Etna, but enough was left to console us for our weary walk. It is from this place that the beauty of Palermo and its position are best estimated ; what a scene of richness and cultivation is seen everywhere ! how grand and imposing is the amphitheatre of mountains ; even the most unsentimental traveller cannot look down upon this scene without the exclamation so grateful to woman's ears, "How beautiful !"

After half an hour's rest, I pursued my way to the statue of Santa Rosalia ; and as I had nails in my shoes, it required the greatest care ; when the foot-fall *is* on rock, the pedes-

trian's eyes must always be on the earth, without he wishes to run every risk of breaking his back; nor was it a pleasant occupation for stiff joints, to keep turning and twisting, in order to place the feet on the earth. I am quite convinced the contemplative saint never scaled that hill for a quiet moment; she was far too wise and considerate for that, and besides, it was her duty to be keeping guard lest heretics and enemies assailed the coast. The walk continues on the plateau along an apology for a road, until the shrine and the statue of Santa Rosalia are reached. She is placed on the summit of a bluff cliff, enshrined, as it were, in a temple, wearing a black robe, and with a coiffeur of roses. She faces the sea, and looks about as sick of her situation as any saint in marble I ever saw. It may be that her votaries are not over-respectful of the sanctuary, and customs "more honoured in the breach than the observance," most unrighteously prevail. From this jutting eminence the whole of the north-western coast is visible, and the form of the island pretty accurately distinguished.

Whilst I was endeavouring to stamp the

likeness of the saint on my mind, in order to see if there was the smallest resemblance between the marble and the paintings, I heard one or two words which strongly reminded me of the English language, but there was no one near but my friend, and a Sicilian boy who was supposed to be watching a donkey; the latter had taken an inquisitorial promenade towards some cows. Leaning over the lower part of the circular building, I espied my unsentimental friend of Switzerland busily employed dissecting a fowl, with the everlasting accompaniment, cold tongue, within his reach; but my friend, however unsentimental as to views from mountains or from church steeples, seemed to have provided himself with rather a tidy companion in a blue bonnet, with a pair of as black eyes as ever sparkled in the Marina. He had placed himself and his black-eyed beauty in such a position, that he could not be bothered even by Mount Etna had it been visible, for he was ensconced, as it were, in the bottom of the basin of rocks, which shielded him from the Sirocco and the view, and gave him the full benefit of the sun, which must have been powerful enough, as he was

placed, to set the wine in a bubble. I recognized him in a moment, in spite of a huge straw hat, which looked like a yellow umbrella over his head. Nothing attracted his notice but the fowl and the tongue. I might have bellowed "Cease, rude Boreas," and got up an accompaniment of the elements, and he would have continued stuffing himself, and talking to, without looking at, his pretty companion. What could have brought that man up this miserably-paved Monte Pellegrino, without he was too sleepy to eat at home, and the walk freshened his appetite? He troubled himself as little about the saint as he did about the view.

The breeze suddenly changed, and the cool air from the sea was refreshing: far as the eye could reach, were divers small specks, in comparison with which a pin's head would have been a mountain; and there were ships with hundreds of human creatures on board, all struggling on through life, all calling themselves lords of the creation, all imagining the world too small for their exertions; and there, also, in the distance, the same sun which shone upon the sea, shining upon that prison,

Ustica. What a strange world it is! here was my unsentimental friend stuffing and cramming himself, with his blue-bonneted companion, shut out from the world, regardless of all but himself, holding life only as a thing to be got through somehow, the greatest slave to himself, although free, and within range of his eye was an island, every inhabitant of which was a slave to one man, with but one freedom, and that not to be uttered—"thought." There, also, in the far ships, were human creatures toiling to become slaves, for who are such slaves as those who rise to some eminence in a despotic government? The slaves of Ustica could not be said to toil to be free; when once the livery of the red jacket and chain is put on, there is but little chance of its ever being changed. Where no press exists, no supplication for mercy is likely to be heard, no popular feeling can find a voice. A nation may be *said* to be contented, for it may be argued, when none complain, they cannot be wronged; and thus do great nations grovel on, enslaved, oppressed, plundered; but as no voice can be raised, no meeting held, no wrong published, the unjust

and the ungenerous of other countries declare the despotism which does not enslave them, the best government for their neighbours, and point to the forced calm, as the proof of contentment.

The lengthening shadows began to warn me that I had better take my leave of Santa Rosalia, and leave my unsentimental travellers behind me; taking a last farewell look at the marble statue, which I had not seen for thirty years, and, most probably, I never shall see again, I began to retrace my steps. At first, all went smoothly enough; but directly I came to the descent, then I most ungratefully, and, I have no doubt, very irreligiously, began to tumble out a heap of maledictions against the shoemaker of Geneva, who had fortified my boots for the glaciers and the mountains. Getting up was bad enough, but getting down again was most laborious—most painful; and I esteemed myself excessively lucky that I only measured my length once. A very few days afterwards, my invaluable servant, Lowe, sprained his leg so badly in descending, that I lost his services for many a week.

I confess—and am not ashamed to confess

it—that when I found myself again in Ragusa's comfortable inn, I indulged in a little extra expense, determined, in my own mind, that the toil was well recompensed by the pleasure derived, but was excessively grateful the sight was *done*.

## CHAPTER V.

### AN EXCURSION FROM PALERMO.

THERE is an excursion always made, and providing it be not a Sirocco, or too strong a breeze to raise much dust, the excursion will be pleasant enough; but remember that a "sinking case" may be requisite. It is rather a long drive by the Favorita to Monnello Sferra Cavallo, the Isola delle Femmine, returning by another road which skirts the hills. The Favorita and its gardens, fountains, walks, views, and contrivances, are well worth a visit, even if it were not a palace—but a deserted one—of his majesty of Naples; and a sweet, delicious retreat it might be from the cares, the troubles, and the vexations of life, but it is untenanted; his majesty of Naples never visits now his Sicilian subjects, and the Favorita

is become a drive for the privileged, or a sight for the traveller. Although it stands on low ground, and has the Monte Pellegrino overlooking its garden of oranges and its sparkling fountain, yet, from its summit, there is a fine view of the Cape de Gallo, and the Gulf.

In days gone by, there must have been "midnight shout and revelry" in this summer palace; for here the table of the convivial guests sinks by machinery, and rises again almost instantaneously with cooler wine, fresher fruit, or sweeter flowers; the descending table is lifted off the platform, and another with another service replaces it: it would be awkward if inebriation had overcome any of the party, who, deprived of the support of the table, might accidentally take a header into the soup tureen. All this is past now, and the mysteries of those days, if they are known, are sealed within the guardian's lips; but it is a charming retreat, and admirably adapted for the climate.

In pursuing the drive to Monnello, you again come upon the coast, passing high romantic cliffs, which, of course, are immediately outlined in the sketch-books, to be shown to every admirer on the return; the road, which

is to become good in time, required no sketching; everybody who was jolted and banged about over these masses of unbroken stones, will have a painful remembrance of the route, without referring to a sketch of it.

In this excursion you, as it were, turn the north-westernmost part of the island, and coming into a miserable village, but still one which might become desirable, at a trifling outlay, called Sferra Cavallo, see the Isola delle Femmine. Why it rejoiced in that envied name, I never could discover; it certainly was not from the beauty of the women who might have inhabited it; neither is there any romantic history that it ever was only inhabited by women; neither do many women inhabit it now. It is a low, common-place-looking island enough; but it still has an historical record, for it was on this island that Cotisone, who had represented himself as Don Sebastian, King of Portugal, who was killed in Africa, was most cruelly tortured, and executed. History is ready enough to chronicle the cruelties and the vices of men, but the virtues and the clemencies of sovereigns, although conspicuous enough in their own edicts, are seldom recorded in the pages of the past.

There are other sights to be done before the traveller leaves the coast; and amongst these, the Bagharia claims some attention. This village is situated on the road to Termini, and is, and was, the residence of many of the Palermitan nobility: it is on the eastern shore of the bay of Palermo. From a belvedere belonging to the Villa Valguarnera, there is a beautiful view of the two gulfs; the conformation of the north-eastern part of Sicily may be accurately ascertained, whilst the view of Solanto, the high, bold promontories, and luxuriantly-cultivated country, will repay the visitor for the very slight trouble of mounting the rocky path which leads to this summer-house. Nor is the drive from Palermo disagreeable, or the road bad; but certainly the mighty Princes Cattolica, Valquarnera, Palagonia, and others, would not deteriorate from the value of their villas, if they made the approach to them a little less hazardous to carriage springs. The village itself has been well designed, and, with a little care and capital, the Bagharia might become a most charming residence. It is here that the traveller may see the fallen splendour of the Palermitan nobility—for the villas show, to this day,

that the rich and the great once inhabited them; and even in the fantastic taste of the Prince Palagonia, whose garden was studded with a profusion of the ugliest marble monsters which imagination could suggest, there is some trace of grandeur and of opulence. Although the son of this fanciful prince has very wisely smashed the greater and the uglier distortions, there are still plenty remaining to suggest the idea that the originator must have had more money than wit. It is said that the old prince drew the sketches from which these unnatural monsters were marbled—a proof that his time was his own, and his talents not required by his sovereign. The sketches must have been the result of a nightmare, or a feverish dream, of heathenish imagination.

The interior of these villas, their position, their gardens, all confirm what the traveller is willing to admit, that in days now past, when a very different government presided over this island—days gone for ever—some of the Sicilians might have rivalled those great names which are still recorded along the coast of Posepoli. If three or four millions of English capital were thrown into Sicily, and the energy, skill, industry, and talents of those

men who possess such wealth could be transferred to this earthly paradise, in a very few years the "Sicania" of the ancients would become one of the richest gems of the modern world. There is no island with more capabilities of improvement, no soil richer, no land more fruitful, no climate more desirable; it has harbours of security, and fields of abundance; but it has inhabitants without energy, and a scanty population, without wealth and without industry. It is a sin to see this garden overrun with weeds; and when the next European war comes, which, perhaps, is not very far distant, a little disregard of the modern *meum et tuum* might benefit the country which may chance to appropriate this neglected beauty to herself.

There is scarcely a mile of ground in the neighbourhood of Palermo which does not recall the age of the Saracens. These people improved the countries they conquered, and have left behind them, even to this remote age, traces of their skill and industry. There are still two castles, built by these people, in the Moorish style, well worthy a visit; one, the Palazzo Zisa, in the Olivuzza, nearly opposite the Prince of Butera's Villa Wilding, be-

longing to the Prince de la Scherra; the other, the Palazza Cuba, on the Morreale road, now, *tempora mutantur*, a cavalry barrack.

History, perhaps a little poetical, and with a few licences, attributes these buildings to some magnificent Emir, who named them after his beautiful daughter; but I doubt if the Arab inscriptions, still visible on the walls, are in attestation of the assertion; nor does the fountain at the entrance gate, although it bears evidence of its antiquity—and by those well versed in science is declared to be of the time of the Caliphs—confirm in any manner, by any record, the above.

The Zisa is well placed, and merits the commendation of Boccacio, who mentions this picturesque position in his "Decameron." But all the glories of the Zisa are vanished, and we must seek on the terrace, which is the roof of the castle, those beauties of nature which seldom fail. The clear atmosphere of Sicily gives to the enchanting landscape a beauty and originality beyond imagination; turn from the structures of men, the city, and remark the fantastic mountains which encircle the luxuriant plains glowing in all the brilliancy of the orange, the citron, the wild

laurel, the aloe, and the wide-leafed fig-tree—the scene is the perfection of landscape, it can scarcely be rivalled—it cannot be surpassed; here one might realize the thousand anecdotes of Love, which has, according to almost all sentimental poets, resorted to richly perfumed groves, arcadian sweets, and shaded shrubberies—but we seldom see such Sicilian doves billing and cooing even in these delightful retreats; and it requires another age of independence and chivalry before the "pale regent of the night" would be called upon, as in Falconer's "Shipwreck," to attest the constancy, or the vows, of desponding lovers.

If I were to quote from Karaczay, and he only wrote ten years ago, the following might be found, which would sufficiently prove that billing and cooing were general in Sicily. "There exists a great deal of gallantry in Palermo; there are very few ladies who do not intrigue; and this should be attributed to the climate. Love, passion, appetite, are in general infinitely more ardent in the south than in the north. Truth in their sentiments, constancy in their affections (!!), idleness, and a distaste for study, form the character of the Sicilian women." And after this, the Count

runs into ecstacies on the beauties of the Princess Tre-Case and her sister, and finishes his complimentary remarks by applying to them the lines of Rinuccini:

"Il guardo che ferisce ovumque tocchi
La Grazia sua, la sua belta divina
Fan dell' anime dolce rapina."

It is hard to reconcile the disposition to intrigue, with the constancy in affection; but perhaps the Count meant to say, that they were constant to one—until they took another. There are gardens, and groves, and lulling waters, and perfumed bowers, in the grounds of the Villa Radali Serra de Falco, and other villas, in which an hour or two might be very agreeably passed with a black-eyed beauty o. Sicily, if the malicious gardener did not touch the hidden spring, and cool the amorous pair by a deluge from the deceptive fountain.

Let those who delight in the most splendid vivid colours which Nature has bestowed on flowers, visit the Botanical Gardens; in some respects, especially in reference to Brazilian flowers, this well-arranged and carefully-kept garden is not surpassed in Europe. The traveller, cunning in the science, if he has the

good fortune to attract the attention of the Cavallero V. Tineo, will improve his knowledge, and bear witness with me to the urbanity, courtesy, and science of this talented and much-respected gentleman. The cavallero is head of the establishment, and imparts his extensive knowledge, in lectures, to those who crowd to listen to his instructions; but I confess, with much regret, that I never understood this fascinating branch of education—not even in the language of flowers; and am the son of a man who candidly confessed he did not know the "difference between the leaf of a potato and that of a stinging-nettle." There is an English garden at the termination of the Strada Macqueda, and the royal gardens, close to the Botanical Gardens; in fact, Sicily is garden from one end of it to the other; and the inhabitants are as hospitable as their ground is fruitful.

What a consummate bore is the difference of money in different countries; it is said, at Hamburgh, that if a guinea is changed backwards and forwards twelve times, there is nothing left of it—its value is lost in the different exchanges, which, much as I have travelled, I rarely found in my *favour*; but

here, although a part of the Neapolitan dominions, we have a jumble of the coins of both countries. Who is to unravel this complicated skein of monetary cobweb? "The accounts are kept in ounces of 30 tari, which are divided into 20 grani each. The taro is equal in value to 2 carlini, 20 grani, 15 ponti, or 120 piccioli; the Sicilian piastre is 12 tari, the fiorino at 6 tari, or 12 carlini, and the ducat at 10 tari." Just imagine a stranger in the land, during a sirocco, endeavouring to quench his thirst, calculating the amount of £46 15*s.* $3\frac{1}{4}d.$ in such unintelligible coin, with the exchange at $53\frac{1}{8}$. Put your faith in Gardner, Rose, and Co., and let Ragusa pay himself. Without you intend becoming a resident, it is not, as Samuel Weller said of marriage, "worth the while going so far to know so little;" but if you have to go into the interior, you must pay for horses or mules; there are barriers and bills, and terrible griffonage of writing and figures to decipher and to cipher; and as "a little learning is a dangerous thing," you had better "drink deep, or taste not this *Pactolian* spring," or purchase some other man's noddle, and put it in the rumble of the carriage.

What advantage it would be to the world generally, if all the languages were hammered into one, and all the monies, weights, and measures, made intelligible by one universal system; to be sure, it would require some talent to transmute the Austrian metallics into silver, or to make the two sous piece of France equal in value to one English half-penny. It is astonishing how a despotism following a revolution enriches the sovereign, and deteriorates the currency; but, certainly, we find a man who had not enough silver to jingle on a tombstone, suddenly voting himself one million, two hundred thousand pounds sterling a-year, and by a new coinage making a penny less than a halfpenny—rather a fortunate youth, if money makes happiness.

There are still sights to be seen; there is the university, founded by Ferdinand, a monarch who gave his royal countenance to science and the arts. The university has been united to the academy, from which union has sprung a kind of museum. The Prince Belmonte, whose villa is one of the most striking objects in the Bay of Palermo, and who seems, from his chateau, if ever he resides in it, to be of the richest, has given handsome legacies of

pictures to the academy—and they are far better there, than dangling on the deserted walls of the villa; here also are divers statues which were dug up from under the ruins of Tindari, one of the many ancient towns of Sicily, now only to be traced in history. We have a Flora, which merits attention, and Adrian, as a priest, both of Greek artists; here also is a vast collection of medals; but it is no less true than strange, that this academy is indebted to two English travellers, Harris and Angel, for the works of art discovered in the ruins of the temple of Salinunti, and which are as valuable, as relics, as any statue within the walls; the bas-relief of Perseus, assisted by Minerva, cutting off the head of Medusa, from whose blood sprung forth Pegasus, is a fine specimen.

It must not be imagined that because fine names are given to places, that the places are fine; and those who go in search of the celebrated fountain, which is, in truth, a fine piece of architecture and sculpture, in the Pretorian Place, will wonder how so elegant a fountain ever got jammed into so narrow a space, and how any such locale could have been dignified by such an appellation. This

fountain is by far the most magnificent of Palermo, and if it stood in a vast open square, it would be more admired, with its numerous figures and animals, than shut up in this cribbed and confined position. It must be admitted, that both men, women, and brutes, seem tired of their duty, and squirt water with apparent reluctance and parsimony.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE ROAD TO SEGESTA.

I NEVER intended my Travels to be a dull, cold, formal description of places, men, and manners, but a kind of jog-trot, easy pace over the high-road of life; as for descriptions of paintings, or delineations of statues, I leave them to those "cunning in such arts." But as a Diary becomes amusing reading when time has somewhat clouded the imagination, so I trust these little flights and excursions may recall the pleasure I have experienced, to others, and relieve an hour of its heaviness.

As the viceroy had desired me to give him notice when I intended to leave Palermo for the interior, I ventured to suggest to his excellency, that it was high time for me to visit the temple of Segesta—or, as it is sometimes

written, Œgesta—and I fixed on the 29th of April for my departure.

A visit from the minister of police resulted in the information that I should find suitable escorts on the road, and that his excellency had himself written to the curé of Calatafime (Pampeluna) to house and to feed me. The attention was more than I could have expected, but his excellency had before told me, that there were no hotels in the interior, and that those who were under his protection were received with pleasure by his friends; and as the minister of police had the charge of my person, I regarded the escort, which I vainly endeavoured to avoid, as a duty, as well as a kindness on his part.

We mustered four masters, one man, and one woman servant—rather a large cargo to be stored in a curé's house, in a country village. Ragusa was informed of the move; and he told us, that we had nothing to do but to read up our history, make ourselves comfortable, and pay the expenses—as for trouble, it was his business to take that upon his shoulders, but that we must be ready to start by half-past seven, as Calatafime was forty-two miles distant, and although we were to

have a relay of horses at Partenico, we should not arrive at a convenient hour for the curé if we did not start betimes.

All moving about is more or less expensive; but in Sicily there is no occasion to be ruined, and Ragusa makes the bargain fair and honourably; here it stands, that all may know, who are inclined to follow the same pilot: "Large carriage with rumble, three horses, with a relay of three horses to Calatafime and back, nineteen piastres; buonamano, two piastres."

There were as many preparations made for this important journey as if the road ran through the forest of Bondy, and the resting-place was in the great desert. I found my noble companion polishing up his revolver; and the "sinking case" was replenished, six bottles of porter made their appearance, with another bottle, which I suspected contained something stronger—and as for oranges and biscuits, we might have regaled a half-starved boys' school.

Women and ships are both of the feminine gender, but in reference to a signal to get under weigh, the advantage is certainly with the latter; although the order was given over-

night to be ready to make sail at half-past seven, it was half-past eight before we started. It is said, that a gale of wind shakes everything in its place, but no vessel in a cross sea ever plunged and rolled as did our vehicle over the first mile of road outside of the Porta Nuova; the road was undergoing repairs, and driving over loose 68lb. shot would have been ease and comfort to what we experienced; but it was a satisfaction to see improvements were progressing.

The road soon got better, and we began to leave the coast, gradually ascending. On the left was a scene of abundant fertility; it was the season of the year when every tree and plant was in full leaf and flower, and there was a richness and brightness all around. The cool air of the morning, which the sun had not as yet heated, gave us all a freshness and vivacity, and not a soul thought of either the "sinking case" or the porter.

The steep ascent, which is a winding road as you near Morreale, has, on its sides, seats for the weary, statues rather mutilated, much in want of soap and water; and here and there the remnants of decayed greatness are manifest in what once were fountains.

The contrast between the arid rocks, heaped one on another—the result of some volcanic eruptions—and the excessive fertility on the slopes to the left, gives a variety of scenery, which made an enthusiastic clergyman who accompanied us burst into raptures,—and ask for the oranges.

As the three horses had quite enough labour to perform in their twenty miles of distance to Partenico—for the carriage was none of the lightest, and of seven people, not to mention the luggage, three or four were heavy hunting-weight; the coachman brought us to a walk as he began to ascend the hill, which bears evidence of its fallen grandeur. At the first turn we met a considerable number of the extensive family of mendicants; they were very naked—very dirty—very fat—and very lazy; they were taking a quiet siesta on Nature's bed, but rose with becoming agility as the time arrived to pour forth in words—the lies they had committed to memory.

It is by no means uncommon for these wonderfully-gifted creatures to solemnly declare they have not eaten anything for fifteen days: and as we hear of nothing now but commissioners for enquiring into the cause of

everything, I propose a commission should be nominated to ascertain how people live and get fat who never eat—for fat they are. It was proposed by the doctor of the "Alceste," when she was lost, that the men should be compelled to bathe, and thus to satisfy thirst by drinking, as it were by absorption; and we are told the experiment succeeded. Why not try caking some of the poor in mud, for the Sicilian beggars are dirty enough to warrant the experiment, and ascertain if vegetable diet cannot be communicated also by absorption?

As the carriage moved slowly on, the attendants increased in numbers; we overtook the different batches at their respective lounges, and by the time we had got inside of the gateway at Morreale, we might have been supposed to be heading a procession of Nature's most unadorned classes to the shrine of St. Anthony, as that unfortunate gentleman is the guardian of these clamorous liars—cripples on crutches—wizened hags, with shrivelled shanks, noseless faces—naked boys, robust but ragged rascals—squalling children, and black-eyed, smiling girls; they all joined together in the chorus of want, and all bellowed,

lisped, or uttered the "niente mangiare per quindici giorni."

On arriving at the cathedral, an object visible to all who arrive by sea, for it stands towering on the summit of a mountain, the square was filled with attendants, and nothing but the privilege of infringing the liberty of the subject, by shutting the door in the faces of the poor, gave us the faintest chance of seeing this magnificent church, which is the finest monument in Sicily, from its size, its architecture, its marbles, and its mosaics.

This cathedral is called Santa Maria la Nuova, and was built in 1174, during the reign of the Norman William the Second, called "the Good;" from the year 1182 it has enjoyed the privileges of a metropolitan archbishopric, having those of Catanea and Syracuse as suffragans. Adjoining this church there is a monastery of Benedictine monks, who originally came from La Cava, into which the curious eyes of ladies are forbidden to pry.

Directly the ladies were informed that those monks had overcome all passion, disdained the charms of the sex—or, perhaps, were afraid of falling victims had they indulged

their curiosity—and would not allow a female foot, however small and neat, to tread the pavement which led to their solitary cells, they began to see if a bribe could not effect what prudence and religion prohibited. I never saw people more resolutely determined to see what they were told they were not permitted to see, than my female companions. The guide, on hearing the musical chink of the bribe, winked and blinked, and whispered the "aspetta un momento;" but it was evident the mighty structure, the high-vaulted roofs, the tombs of the dead, the silver altars, and all the gorgeous display of marbles and mosaics, sunk into insignificance in comparison with the narrow, miserable, solitary cell of the ascetic Benedictine—which was the forbidden fruit.

I doubt if ladies have at all improved since the time of Eve. What, in the name of St. Agatha herself, could they expect to see in the bed-room of a brown-covered Benedictine?

The church is in the form of a Latin cross, 304 palms in length, 130 in its widest, and 90 in its smallest breadth; it has three naves, with a profusion of pillars, which appear to have been taken from various edifices to adorn

this splendid monument, as some are Greek and some of Norman style, the capitals being different. These columns seem very fashionable appendages, for there are no less than 200 employed in supporting the portico of the Benedictine Convent; they seem to have but a light weight to uphold, and one might apply to them the two lines which were written upon the useless colonnade which formerly stood in front of Carlton House—

"Care colonne, chi fate quì?
Non sappiamo in verità."

But the columns which support the arches in the church are of oriental granite, and very imposing.

There are four altars, the principal one of which is of silver—but not even the glittering metal seemed to attract many of the faithful; and I never remember to have seen any church, which could have accommodated so many people, so totally devoid of anything like religion or prayers. It is a strange, cold, stately edifice — it has greatness, richness, magnificence—but it has not within it that which makes a man feel he is in a church. Here repose some *parts* of the mighty dead, such as

the intestines of St. Louis; here, also, are the mausolea of William the First, the Wicked, and William the Second, the Good: the first is in porphyry, with divers "bas-reliefs!" there are pillars of the same stone which uphold a covering of oriental granite, which, during the fire in this church, was split in pieces. The mausoleum of William the Good is in white marble, and was but little damaged. The monument of the father was raised by the son, and that of the son by Archbishop Torres, in 1575. The fire destroyed five other mausolea, in which were the bodies of the two first Archbishops of Morreale, of Queen Margaret, the mother of William II., and two of his brothers.

Around the gloomy walls of this vast edifice, are mosaic works of the whole history of the Old and New Testament, from the creation of the world to the day of Pentecost. In the two aisles, the lives of St. Peter and St. Paul are described; but throughout the whole building, however much it may be restored, the traces of the damages of the fire which broke out on the 11th of November, 1811, are plainly visible.

There are three chapels, all worthy of obser-

vation, the first constructed by Ludovico de Torres, a Cardinal Archbishop of Morreale, in the sixteenth century, dedicated to Sainte Castreuse. The second, called the Chapel of the Crucifix, was erected in 1692, by Giovani Ruano, and is adorned with marbles of various colours. The third chapel was built by the monks of this cathedral in the eighteenth century, and was dedicated by them to St. Benedict, who is represented in a group of clouds, the work of a celebrated Sicilian sculptor, Marabiti. The pavement of this and the other chapels is of marble, and several passages in the life of the Saint are recorded on the walls.

This church merits all the praise which several authors have lavished on it; but the wind whistled hoarsely under the bronze doors which are so admired—the church looked cold and dull, and I found the view from the summit much more in accordance with my feelings, than the half-destroyed mausolea, or the gaudy-coloured mosaic. In vain I pointed out the beauties of the surrounding view, there was only one view which attracted the attention of the ladies—the convent—they were as resolute as ever to get in, and made

an advance in that direction; but the gate had to be passed, and the guardian of this sanctum was as repulsive in his manner as he was in his features; he beckoned the ladies away with the anger of a man who felt that all the woes of life originated in the sex. One lady declared she would soon return dressed as a boy, and baffle even that old Argus; the other sighed over the disappointment; and I, knowing the value of time, hurried them away from the gate, which, however much opened to men, was very resolutely closed to them.

We now journeyed merrily onwards, but scarcely had cleared the town, when out rushed an escort, four dragoons, and began to take us under their protection.

As the day was hot, the road dry, and the dust in clouds, I thought I might, without particularly perilling my soul, tell what Marryat calls "the gentleman usher to a black lie," *a white one*; so I informed the officer that I thought he had mistaken his charge, as another family of high distinction was to leave Palermo for Calatafime, about half-an-hour after us. It succeeded; the escort halted, and then returned to the place from which they

had emerged, and left us to ascend the excellent road which winds round the various hills to Borghetto, which is a dirty, straggling village, with about 5000 souls. The village is beautifully and romantically situated, and now, descending into a country which, if it were possible, looked more luxuriantly rich than that which is in the vicinity of Palermo, we get to Partenico, without having seen many signs of agricultural movement; we scarcely passed three carts and five mules, although the road was excellent, and every facility given for the intercourse with the different localities. It is particularly from the highest point of the road which overlooks Partenico, and where Palermo and its blue sea are just fading from the sight, and Castellamare and its rich gulf are opening to the view, that the following passage in Deuteronomy occurred to me as most applicable :—" A good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths that spring out of valleys and hills. A land of wheat and barley, and vine, and fig-trees, and pomegranates, a land of oil olive and honey." It is a splendid country, and warrants the further quotation :—" A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness—thou shalt not lack

anything in it—a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass."

Partenico may be dignified as a town—it has 14,000 inhabitants, and at least 13,500 beggars; there is a broad street the whole length of the place, which gives it a greater air of cleanliness than in the neighbouring towns or villages. Partenico stands in the bottom of a well-cultivated basin, through which abundant streams fertilize the fields. The sides of the slopes are well wooded, and possess another charm besides the many Nature has bestowed upon them—they are well stocked with game; there is in its vicinity a country palace, which belonged to the king's brother, and he has made a capital selection as to locality.

Directly we arrived, we were made acquainted with the 13,500 beggars, more or less. I never saw such an army of tatterdemalions, such hosts of animated rags—and it must be confessed that one part of my above quotation was not applicable—"thou shalt not lack anything in it;" for here, in spite of the corn and the wine, hunger, and want, and misery, stood starving and shivering around us. In spite of all the preparations made at

Palermo for eating and drinking on the road, it became requisite to buy some bread; and it soon became evident that the poor here, however habituated to solicit alms, were really in the utmost want: the very sight of the bread lighted up the savage vulture of the eyes, and the fight which ensued to gain the smallest piece of food thrown from the carriage, was demonstrative enough of excessive want.

Those who could not get near the carriage, now begun a regular rush, and it seemed a perfect impossibility to clear the way even for the horses. The escort for the second part, who were not to be deceived like the first, and had taken up their charge at Borghetto, looked on at the crowd with the greatest unconcern, and when they might have been of some use in clearing the way, sat listlessly in their saddles. We bought, and bought, and distributed; but it required a second miracle of the loaves and fishes to have fed this multitude. We now began to feel uneasy; for although one of the ladies had brought a sack of grani to give to the beggars, she never contemplated such a demand as the present—the myriad were howling, gesticulating, bawling, begging.

The lesson of the servant of the archbishop at Naples had not been thrown away upon me, and I offered a small piece of silver to be divided *equally*. I knew that would have puzzled a calculating machine, but it drew some of the crowd in the rear of the carriage; and when the horses were at last harnessed, and as they moved on, I threw handfuls of grani as far as possible, when, thanks to the whip, some encouraging words of promise to the driver, and the freshness of the animals, we got clear of this progeny of Lazarus, and left the town in glorious confusion and desperate battle.

The Saracen conquerors of Sicily were men of courage, science, and taste; and Alkamah, who, in 828, founded the town, now called Alcamo, but pronounced by the natives Arcamo, showed his appreciation of the beautiful when he selected the spot for that city, which seems destined for ever to bear his name. It is about fifteen miles from Partenico, but occupies the reverse position. Partenico stands in a hollow, Alcamo on a height, giving a most picturesque appearance from its position, its towers, and its walls. It retains much of its Moorish origin—even to the dress of the people.

The women envelope their faces in dark serge, crossing it over so as to exhibit but little of the features—a kind of mixture of the fashion of the Spaniards and the Turks: the better classes—but that is a vague term, in this town of 13,000 souls—have the large, dark, silken manteau, with their faces partially covered.

It was in this town that I ventured into a country inn in Sicily. Well might I warn all travellers in the words, "Avoid it; fear it; do not enter it." But enter it you must, if your wearied mules require rest, and you are not of the favoured of those in high positions. Poor old Conyers, of Copt Hall, had a far better accommodation for his hounds: I never saw so dirty, so disgusting a hovel to designate as an *Inn*.

At Alcamo, I endeavoured to liberate myself from the bondage of grandeur, and assured the fresh escort that I was under no apprehension for my personal safety, and could dispense with their services. This being communicated to the commander of the forces, an officer was sent to explain that I should suffer no inconvenience, or incur any expense; but the order transmitted to him from Palermo was imperative, and must be obeyed; and this was com-

municated to me with such excessive good taste and kindness, that I again resigned myself to my position, and saw carts ordered to halt, whilst his excellency passed!

The road the whole distance from Palermo to Calatafime is admirable, and, as we left Alcamo, we became aware of some of its difficulties. Behind us lay the country of wine and oil, corn and manna. Near Alcamo the sumach (*rhus corioria*) grows wild in great quantity, the leaf of which, reduced to powder, is much used in the preparation of leather;—before us, the scene had changed, and the hilly road wound its way over uncultivated slopes.

As there was no sign of cultivation, so there was no sign of habitations; and this once populous district had fallen into barrenness and sterility. As the population had decreased, so had labour; and thus poverty had forsaken the land which required some toil, for that which was abundant without it.

In days when travellers were obliged to use mules, and when this excellent road (not yet five years of age) did not exist, the space between Alcamo and Segeste was not unfavourable for the amusement of those speculators in the wealth of others, but now these bands of marauders are

cleared away, and Sicily may be traversed from east to west, north or south, without a revolver or an escort.

The lengthening shadows of evening warned us of the few minutes we had to spare; the clouds were rising and lowering, the summits of the hills were capped in mist, the wearied horses seemed animated with the same hope as ourselves that the journey was over; and by six o'clock we saw the escort halted, and our carriage safe at the door of the hospitable and revered Pampeluna. He stood ready to receive us, a man with a remarkably fine countenance, and although during his life he had never even visited Palermo, and had but few opportunities of mingling with those who hold "the glass of Fashion," there was an elegance in his simplicity, and character in his manner, which stamped him as an unpretending but true gentleman. The exterior of the house gave a fair promise of comfort, which, however, the entrance, down a narrow lane, somewhat reproved; but after ascending the stairs, we came to a suite of rooms elegantly, comfortably, and usefully furnished, and received from the curé and his brother the warmest and most sincere welcome.

At first our mutual presentation was somewhat formal; only my honourable friend and myself spoke Italian, and the curé and his brother were confined to that language; but very shortly the lively, quick, animated, and cheerful manner of the ladies removed the necessary cold formality of strangers, and the repetition of phrases whispered into feminine ears, and then uttered from as pretty a mouth as ever badly pronounced the softest of languages, established an open and unreserved confidence.

Whilst the requisite toilette of the lady was in progress, my curiosity prompted me to ramble through a part of the town, accompanied by the brother of the curé, who wrapped himself up as warmly as a thin man in a frosty morning, for the wind was now blustering, and there was a promise of some rain.

It is impossible, however enthusiastic I was at my reception, to declare the town of Calatafime anything but a heterogeneous jumble of houses, without many signs of prosperity or affluence; the road was miserable; there was nothing, that I could see, to make the gloom of darkness more visible, excepting near the church, one lamp.

Out of the 8000 inhabitants, 6000 of whom are under the spiritual guidance of Pampeluna, and the other 2000 (all good Catholics, for I doubt if there is a heretic in the town), under the care of another curé, who was invited to meet us, vast numbers were to be seen sheltering themselves from the wind by the angle of the houses, wrapped up as carefully as Neapolitan fishermen in their sharpest *winter*, and looking especially surly and discontented. I have come to the conclusion that very few people, however flourishing, are contented with their situation, but are, like servants, however well placed, always looking to "better themselves." But there was a peculiar look of sullen resignation, which might suddenly change to a more active vindictiveness, if, unfortunately, an opportunity occurred, to call such passion into energy.

It was from an eminence, crowned by an old ruin, that I saw the celebrated temple, which stands upon the summit of a hill at the foot of Mount Eryx, called Segesta. It is alone in all its solitary grandeur; the clouds were flying rapidly past it, the rain swept over it, and darkness began to shroud it. My companion having sheltered himself from the

breeze, and expressed his sensation of cold by visible shiverings, I thought it but an act of common civility to forego my own pleasure by seeking to re-establish his; we returned to the curé, and eight o'clock, an unusally late hour, found us seated round the well-furnished and hospitable table of our host.

Pampeluna, his brother, and the curé of the 2000, seemed a trinity of excellent companionship. Kindness, hospitality, generosity, seemed to pervade them all; and how any kitchen in Calatafime could have supplied so excellent a dinner, I cannot conceive; for, if the dishes were not actually French, they were well dressed, and far surpassing even the expectation of such hungry travellers; but sometimes national dishes are not in accordance with the taste of foreigners; and one or two of the visitors, allured by a strange-looking animal, in a dark disguise, found themselves eating a stewed rabbit with prunes, which seemed to give a shock to the sensibilities of some, although our clergyman-companion and myself carried, amidst considerable applause, a vote of thanks to the cook.

I never remember a more animated, agreeable party under such peculiar difficulties, for

only two could interpret for the whole, although our clerical friend, with his Oxford Latin, occasionally managed a bright hit, and, being blessed with a good appetite and temper, conduced much to the familiarity and the ease of the society. Ices, and far better than could be purchased in Palermo—for in no part of the world are ices better made than at Naples, or so bad as in Palermo—came in due season. There was a profusion of wines and fruits, and the merry laugh and cheerful conversation only ceased when we were informed that we must be ready by six o'clock in the morning, if we wished to return to Palermo the following day.

Although the hospitable, kind, and liberal Pampeluna urged us not to make a toil of a pleasure, but shew the sincerity of our remarks by accepting his hospitality for a longer time; I was too well aware of the trouble and expense we should occasion, to accept the liberal offer. It would take nearly three hours to visit the Temple, the ruins of the city of Segesta, and the theatre. We were then to return to breakfast; and it required no far-sighted man to see that if the breakfast resembled the dinner, it would be of an hour's

duration ; after which, there was the parting and the preparations, and then the forty-two miles to be trotted over before we reached Ragusa's ; we therefore retired to bed, the number of horses and mules requisite for our morning's expedition being arranged. We slept, as most men sleep who have had some exertion during the day, enjoyed the sincere hospitality of as amiable a man as ever breathed, and found as much cleanliness and comfort as richer people in more convenient situations could have offered.

At a quarter past five the next morning I was in the church of Calatafime, to examine its altar of mosaic work, and there I saw the curé at his duty. Even at that early hour there were many at their devotions: there seemed a scarcity of work for the population ; there was an idle loiter in the walk, and I saw in no one case that active energy which is exhibited in the English field labourer as he goes to his morning's avocation. The inhabitants of Calatafime appeared more like men who were accustomed to rise early, but had no idea how to get through the day ; indeed, the curé afterwards confirmed my remarks, for the surrounding country, with its ungenerous

soil, offered but little labour for so large a population; and idleness, sullenness, and indifference seemed stamped upon them all.

Still there was room for much occupation. The government, who have taken the once sacred Temple of Segesta under their protection, are now busily employed making a road to it. The fine road from Palermo to Calatafime extends to Marsala and Trapani, but it will be years before it takes the round of the island. The small branch to Segesta will terminate there, and there will be some difficulty in the construction; but if, instead of allowing the inhabitants of Calatafime to become discontented from want, numbers were employed beyond the few who lazily and slowly seem to toil at doing very little, brighter countenances might be seen in the neighbourhood.

I walked through every street and lane in the place; the children had not as yet been thrust out to idle away the hours. It is impossible to be complimentary; never were there, in some parts, more significant marks of poverty, wretchedness, dirt, and drowsiness. The main street is fair enough for a Sicilian inland town, but the rest was miserable in the extreme.

What a curious affair life is altogether; it appeared to me, as I watched the existence—the poor, squalid existence—of these people, that there could be no charm in life if there were no occupation, and that such a precarious tenure from starvation, without the power of amelioration, seemed but little, if any, above the most forlorn position in which a man could live—yet all cling to life; but to see, as with the intention of getting old in doing nothing, these people stretch out their limbs in the sun and sleep, it would appear that an eternal slumber from the cares, vexations, wants, and poverty of this life, might be rather courted than shunned.

## CHAPTER VII.

### SEGESTA.

By six o'clock we had a strong muster of horses and mules at the curé's door; but there were very few people whose curiosity had got the better of their drowsiness, although it was seven before we descended the rapid slope which led to the road in construction, and which is not finished beyond half a mile. Pampeluna himself did not accompany us; he consigned our bodies to the care of his brother, and our souls to the protection of his brother curé. I thought, as I carelessly swung my leg across my Rosinante, dressed in a workhouse-looking shooting-jacket, that I had left my "Excellency" behind me with my coat, and that I should get on without being encumbered with honours; but no, I had

scarcely crossed the bridge which leads to the road, than my horse began to show symptoms of astonishment, which was equally shared by myself, as the everlasting escort dashed by me.

My wife, who never was much of an equestrian, conferred the honour of her light weight on a mule; another of the fair sex burthened a donkey, whilst my honourable friend and our gay companion, the clergyman, seemed reminded of former days, as the delicious cool air of the morning reinvigorated and refreshed them. They both had the sportsman's eye as he looks across the country, and pressing their knees and inclining forwards, indulged in a gallop. The escort, hearing the clatter of hoofs, not of shoes, for the Sicilian horse in the country is seldom shod, knowing their station was in front, set off also. Even the fair sex, with mule and donkey, and curé and curé's brother, felt the excitement, and away we all went, laughing, shouting, hallooing—the donkey was not to be left behind, but resolutely maintained its place, every now and then expressing its satisfaction by a lively salute of legs and tail. I doubt if for years that valley had rung with such cheerful voices,

or been gladdened by such bright eyes; but short was our morning's gallop; the road terminated suddenly, and we pulled up all in a heap, to wind one after the other along a narrow pathway, which turned and twisted through brook and briar, and gave us plenty of employment in clearing the boughs from our faces.

About two miles from the town we crossed a ford, and came upon some pasture land. On our left were two hills, and on the flat surface of the farthest stood, in all its majesty and glory, the superb temple of Segesta. We had got over our three miles of ground quicker than we expected. There were plenty of boys ready to hold the horses, the escort dismounted, and betook themselves to the "dolce far niente," the classical Oxford man rubbed up his historical lore, and the rest of us made ourselves up for the sight.

That the situation is admirably selected, and the temple one of the most perfect in Europe, has been the remark of every traveller. The elegant profile and the noble Pronaos, as my Oxford friend called the front, stood boldly out in the clear morning atmosphere, and by the gradual approach the grandeur of the structure became familiar to the mind. It is

225 palms in length, 79 in breadth, and about 63 feet in height. It has 36 columns of the Doric order, some of which are nearly as perfect as the day they were placed; whilst in others, more exposed to the prevalent winds, considerable dilapidation has occurred.

It seems admitted by far better authority than I could venture to dispute, that the pillars not being fluted, is a proof that the temple was never finished; some declare it was dedicated to Ceres, and others to Venus; but what I believe to be certain is this, "that nobody knows anything at all about it," and that all is conjecture. One cannot imagine the rights and ceremonies due to either Ceres or Venus (especially the latter—the former is more of an out-of-door goddess) being performed in an unfinished temple, or unhallowed shrine, for there is no vestige of an interior wall; but to whomsoever it was raised it was worthy, for such is the magic of its proportions, the beauty of its constructions, that, examine it at any point of view, it will enchant the imagination and captivate the attention.

My Oxford friend went from Pronaos to Posticum great in the classics; but in spite of his learning, or what could be gleaned by tra-

dition, he could arrive at nothing beyond the bare fact that it was a most magnificent temple (it can hardly be called a ruin), proudly situated, elegant in all its proportions, and a splendid vestige of the former industry and richness of the country. It must be admitted, that although the government has taken this Temple under its protection, it has not much enhanced its beauty by the inscription on the frontispiece, in which the restoration is attributed to the king. There never was anything in worste taste, excepting always, that ugly royal Minerva of Canova, at Naples.

On the hill adjoining are the ruins of the city of Segesta. The remnant of one of the gates, and a part of the wall of the town, can still be traced; the rest is a huge mass of stones, covering the whole summit of the hill, and showing that the city was one of considerable importance. It was pillaged and ruined by Agathocles, and its name changed to Dicepolis, which, according to the classic knowledge of my Oxford companion, means "the city of vengeance, or of chastisement."

Now came the usual purchase of coins and medals, the half of which are manufactured at Birmingham, and by a very simple process

reduced to the deceptive form and dirt in which they are presented to the unwary traveller. I remember, at Ithaca, when I visited the palace of Ulysses, amongst a profusion of very ancient coins, all declared to be genuine, a friend of mine, a great lover of antiquities, bought, for a considerable sum, a number of warranted original coins from the mint of the wise monarch. There was one which puzzled the buyer; he could not, through the crust of age, discover the device; the coin was submitted to water, scraped with a careful hand, and, by degrees, a kind of Minerva was supposed to be the subject; when, to the disgust of the lover of coins, the stamp of Britannia, on a regular downright, undeniable halfpenny, came to view.

At Tunis, I remember an enthusiastic doctor, who declared he could trace the streets of ancient Carthage under the water; and in his desire to possess a gem of great antiquity, groped about until he felt something which he imagined might have belonged to Dido's dressing-table; he held on to his prize, and, after considerable exertion, became the lucky possessor of one of Day and Martin's blacking bottles! But, of course, standing on the ruins

of the City of Vengeance, the very city beneath our feet, the marks industriously pointed out where search had been made, and the classical countenances of the diggers and delvers before our eyes, how could *we* be deceived?—besides, the brother of the curé, after careful examination, declared the coins genuine; and silver was liberally paid for very suspicious copper.

It is strange to stand upon the ruins of that which had made a city—and a very populous city, for it was the rival of Selinunte—and to recall, in imagination, that thousands of people once lived, and moved, and had their being here! And now, what is it but a confused heap of huge masses of stone, enough alone visible to confirm the traveller in the remains of the wall, the entrance-gate, with the remnant of a pillar, some six feet high? Here the capitals of the columns strew the earth, and the city, which tradition, not history, dates as far back as the pious Æneas, as Byron says of the palaces of the Cæsars, "grovels on earth in indistinct decay." Who could imagine the ruins of London? It seems impossible that such a mass should ever fall to ruins, be levelled by the conqueror, or

shaken into desolation by an earthquake; and yet those who have stood upon the crumbled ruins of cities, are satisfied that such a mighty catastrophe *might* occur; and that some savage, of a future age, may dangle his legs over London Bridge, and give his countrymen a sketch of the wreck.

Of all the enchanting situations which the ancients could select, none could be more beautiful than that on which the Theatre of Segesta stands; it cannot be written *stood*, for it is almost perfect to this day; and if any enterprising Barnum should consider it a good speculation to get up a company, and take a few grani for the admission, he might *open* in a fortnight. The vendors of coins followed us here; a person, who quietly hinted he was the custode, took his accustomed fee; and I, called from the admiration of the beautiful by the height of the sun, withdrew to remount my horses and retrace my steps. But I turned again to witness the splendour of the scenery—the majestic temple standing boldly out in the clear atmosphere, the stern and sterile mountains in its rear, whilst, looking towards the sea, all the cultivated country to the Gulf of Castellamare, the smoke of villages rising in the dis-

tant scenery, the dark foliage, and the silvery streams are visible—I sighed to think, in all human probability, I should never revisit this scene of enchantment, and, with great reluctance, I turned from this comparatively small theatre, which has only a diameter of 224 palms, walked down the ruin-strewed hill to the horses, and made the best of the way to Calatafime.

There is, in the vicinity of this town, which derives its name from the Arab word *calsa*, or *calata*, meaning castle, with the addition of the Italian word *fiume* (river), shortened into "fime," a spring of warm, sulphureous water —my learned friend suggested that here were formerly the baths of Segesta, mentioned by Diodorus; and my readers are welcome to the suggestion.

Even Calatafime looked imposing as we turned the hill, and the ruined castle, the church of the "Fathers of the Cross," and the town itself, standing on a rising ground, came in sight. It was past ten when we dismounted. Pampeluna had not been idle in our absence, nor had his legion of cooks, for we were welcomed to a breakfast equal in abundance to the dinner; nor had the deli-

cacy of ice, which we had so much commended the previous evening, been forgotten. The feast done, the difficulties of departure began.

Every traveller in Sicily and elsewhere knows that when he is received in the curé's house, he cannot insult him by asking for his bill; and it requires some difficulty and delicacy to leave an equivalent. In my case, no equivalent could be left, for the reception was one of the truest hospitality; but I could not depart, having been fed so sumptuously, and received so generously, without some endeavour on my part to repay what I well knew the curé could so little afford to disburse. I had drawn him purposely into a conversation upon the wants of his parishioners, saying, "I had observed many, many poor." The account the worthy curé gave, emboldened me to request his acceptance of a sum of money for *them;* but he meekly folded his arms across his breast, and, in his mild voice, declared it was impossible to accept from the friends of his excellency the viceroy any money whatever. In vain I urged my request; the curé informed me that he supplied the wants of the most necessitous, and that, although

the parish was not prosperous, there were those around who were rich and charitable.

After a long argument on my side, and a steady refusal on his—for he stood always in the same position, and every word he uttered bearing the impress of the truth—I declared that my *conscience* would not allow me to leave a town which, from the kindness I had received, would ever remain fixed on my memory, without contributing to its charities; and as I repeated, laying a great stress upon the word *conscience*, my determination somehow to effect my purpose, the curé said, if it were a case of conscience, he would waive his objection, and I placed in his hands—not one half of what I ought to have done. The whole he never would have accepted, for, as it was, he endeavoured to moderate what he dignified as liberality. The servants were more easily managed, and perhaps did not require to be much pressed.

We had taken our first leave of our generous, liberal friends, for no power of persuasion could overcome their resolution not to allow us to pay for our horses, mules, donkeys, guides, and boys, and descended to get into the carriage: and here I will quote verbatim

from my diary. "We were indebted to the viceroy for all the attention we received at Calatafime, and which I could but feebly describe if I had a hundred times the space I have. It must be wound up in a few words. Nothing could be more warm, more sincere, more affectionate; and of this I am convinced, all the party were as deeply impressed as myself: there was a scene at parting characteristic enough of the people. As we arrived with all the honours of an escort, which escort awaited our return, and had taken care of us even to the temple—it was presumed we were people of consequence—illustrious foreigners of distinction, although without beards or mustachios—so the whole of the lower and lowest part of the population turned out to see us off. The curé took charge of my little wife; but no sooner had she passed the threshold, than a rush of beggars endeavoured to seize her hand. She was in an instant hemmed in, surrounded, and almost imprisoned. She could not stir a step, nor could I, or any of the party, get to the rescue, except by force. It was quite a novel mode of attack to obtain charity; those behind pushed on those in front; many fell down, and the others walked over

them. In her anxiety to get out of such a disagreeable position, my wife threw some grani in the air, and never did I witness such a battle: it was impossible to advance a step without treading on the sprawling children, or more resolute women. The carriage was not ten paces distant; the escort, which now might have been of the greatest service, for it had become one of real danger to a lady, had quietly walked on in advance, and the ten paces were impossible to be made.

As I saw that this partook more of obtaining charity by force than by supplication, I was not nice in my footsteps, and got to the assistance of my wife. In the meantime, Pampeluna raised his hands and his voice, imploring the people to behave with more decency and respect, declaring we had left with him for the poor a magnificent sum; that the lady was frightened and hurt, and that they would better mark their gratitude by a proper and respectful conduct. Pampeluna might as well have whistled to the wind; those down on the ground began to fight in earnest to recover their legs, whilst those who pushed from behind tumbled over those who were rising; and to make the matter worse, the

lane leading from the street to the entrance of the curé's house was narrow. I relieved the pressure by throwing some grani over the heads of those nearest to us, who turned round, and thus checked the torrent; then, disregarding the prostrate position of his Majesty's subjects, I forced my wife over those who were sprawling, and got her safe into the carriage.

In the meantime, the curé, the curé's brother, and the curé of the two thousand, bellowed loudly in pure Sicilian against the rudeness and ingratitude of the natives—but they disregarded the admonition; they saw the prospect of obtaining something immediately. Promises and hopes often fail.

As we had established the party in comparative safety, and had emptied the sack of grani, we once again took a sincere and affectionate leave of Pampeluna, his brother, and the curé; and if this book should ever fall into the hands of any traveller who may make the acquaintance of these liberal, excellent people, that traveller cannot confer a higher favour on me than by recalling me to the curé's remembrance, and confirm in his mind

the words of gratitude and respect I uttered, by mentioning what I have written.

It was not the mere hospitality, and that was excessive, that won all our admiration; it was the Christian-like meekness and mildness, mixed with the liveliness of contentment, which charmed us: he had made his home amongst his flock, and he was happy in his charge. I doubt much if, taking Calatafime as the centre of the circle, he had ever made a circumference of ten miles. Foreign politics engaged not his attention; he never saw a newspaper, as none were printed in his village, and few were rich enough to have the day's history forwarded from Naples, and they would have been fortunate then, had they received the intelligence within a month of its publication. Yet was this man as happy and contented as if the whole world was concentrated in his parish, and listened to and obeyed his exhortation, to love one another, fear God, and honour the king.

The battle and the party being over, the lady's excitement was changed for a flood of tears. My reverend friend dived into the orange basket, the revolver was quietly stowed away, and I, mounted upon the box, looked

back with regret at Calatafime, watching for another and another view of the Temple of Segesta, and then looking forward to the beautiful cultivated country which yet separated us from Partenico.

The early rising and the excitement at parting, not to mention the plentiful supply at breakfast, soon operated upon those in the carriage, and they began to enjoy travelling by falling fast asleep, and dreaming, no doubt, of the magnificence in which Nature has clothed this favoured island. But very short were these slumbers and these dreams, for a bottle of porter, comfortably excited by heat, and rendered furious by the motion, burst beneath their feet, and awoke them in great alarm. The lady screamed, *of course*—my honourable friend endeavoured to find the revolver, and the reverend gentleman kicked up his heels, and thought he was somehow going to be swamped, as his shoes were full, and his lower extremities covered with froth and foam. That little event kept the party awake, and cheerful until we dismissed our escort at the Porta Nuova of Palermo, and we rattled over the pavement to Ragusa's comfortable hotel.

We found the next morning that the Vice-

roy had started for Naples to see his son, who was reported dangerously ill. This altered our projected tour round the island to Messina, for we had seen quite enough of a Sicilian *inn* to run the risk of being shut up there for even a night: we therefore resolved to return to Naples; and I confess I came to the resolution with regret.

The Bay was now plentifully supplied with shipping, and the scene far more animated than usual. For the first time I saw Mount Etna from Ragusa Terrace; it must be about one hundred and twenty miles distant; the weather was clear and fine, and a number of steamers had arrived, whilst a multitude of vessels, mostly under American colours, were availing themselves of the light breeze to clear the land and make the best of their voyage.

The trade with the United States has wonderfully increased of late years, and is still increasing; the stripes and the stars are as numerous as the English flags; the only colours which are seldom seen are those of the Two Sicilies; nor are the French ships so numerous as might be expected. The principal trade is carried on in foreign shipping;

and if, instead of vexatious and petty annoyances, a more liberal and better organized system were adopted, a much more profitable return might be made to the Neapolitan government.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SOCIETY IN SICILY.

In recalling to my memory what Sicily was under the prudent and liberal administration of Lord William Bentinck, I do not see much to approve in the present system. Naples and Sicily, twin sisters in beauty, half ruin each other by their jealousy and their hatred. In fact, with the exception of the road to Marsala, I could discover few, if any, improvements.

There is no chance of railroads; gas is refused; and that which is the most requisite, especially as far as regards the security of the island, the electric telegraph, is not very likely to convey its instantaneous despatches between Naples and Palermo; yet this would cost but little, especially as the Pharo of

Messina is not, in some places, two miles across, and not profoundly deep; and as his Excellency was himself forty hours in a government steam-boat between Palermo and Naples, and the post by Reggio is nearly ten days, there can be no doubt of the immense advantage to be derived from the telegraph. As for the public, no one is supposed to think of their benefit; but for the *security* of the island, this most wonderful of all modern inventions would be inestimable.

We have now to see what may be done by another viceroy, since the active, enterprising, and much-esteemed Filanghieri has resigned. The more we look back, the more evident is the neglect and indifference which has been the curse of Sicily. Its population is gradually decreasing; the interior of the island seems inhabited by a legion of paupers; the population of the cities are heavily taxed, especially in Palermo, where the inhabitants have to pay for the soldiery. There is a general mismanagement in all departments, which *routine* continues; and, what is worse than all, there is the low murmur of discontent, arising in the interior from famine, and

in the cities from the want of sufficient occupation.

The state of society in Sicily greatly contributes to this poverty and inactivity. No man wishes to be regarded as a prominent character, excepting in his individuality. What has been remarked in the sketch by my Villa Reale friend, may extend here. Every man is very great when talking of himself and in security; but when mixed with the multitude, he shrinks from observation, and dares not become conspicuous. Of their loss of liberty, few dare complain, although all feel it; all that binds men together when men are free, is lost when men are slaves. The paid spy, the betrayer of a friend's secret, in order to remove suspicion from himself; the cringing, the fawning, and the cowardly, gladly purchase an indemnity for themselves by the sacrifice of others; hence, properly speaking, there is no society in which friends dare boldly imagine reforms or suggest improvements; the welfare of the nation or its misgovernment must never pass the lips of the citizens; and the easy manner in which even ministers are removed, as in the instance of the Minister of Police, mentioned in the Second Volume, is a

warning voice to all, that legality will not always be consulted.

It is true the ladies dress well, are easy, elegant, and fascinating in their manner; the men, like all high-bred gentlemen, graceful, well-informed, polished—but their conversation must be guarded, their hospitality limited: they may discuss a fashion in dress, and assemble at their Rez de Chaussée Clubs—but they cannot trust the man by their side, or even the more fascinating listener of the weaker sex—they mutually know the danger of every word. Under such a system, all improvements must come from the government; and I doubt if repairing a road might not be imagined a wish to repair a constitution. Nature has done all she could do for this island—man has marred her work. The Saracens have left in every street the proofs of their sagacity and foresight, and yet the Neapolitans call the Sicilians Saracens as a term of obloquy; it would be far better for the Sicilians, if they could imitate the activity and industry of those whom the jealousy of the Neapolitans (as they are proud of their Grecian origin) mentions as a reproach.

In all the changes and chances which have

befallen this island, they never have experienced less paternal care than under the Bourbons. At the fall of the Western Empire, Genseric the Vandal wrested Sicily from the Romans, and devastated it. It was recovered by Belisarius in 535, and fell into the hands of the Saracens in the 45th year of the Hegira, or A.D. 666; for 404 years it was governed by Emirs, until 1070, when they in their turn were vanquished by the Normans. Each of these conquerors more or less benefited the island, and have left records of their improvements. It has passed under the dominion of the Germans, the French, and the Spanish.

It was on the 31st of March 1282, that almost all the French inhabitants of the whole island were murdered in one night. The first sound of the bell which tolled the summons to vespers, was the signal for that slaughter to begin. The Sicilian vespers have been fatally and fearfully stamped upon the memory of all —it is an awful example to all generations; when a *nation* rises, let tyrants look to the consequences—it is not always that an asylum like that of the village of Sperlinga, the only place that refused to join in that slaughter, and even protected these enemies, the French,

who sought refuge within its gates, can be found. Over the doorway of the Hôtel de Ville of this small place, is yet to be seen, "Quod Siculis placuit, sola Sperlinga negavit."

It was Ferdinand the Catholic who united Sicily to the crown of Spain. It was given by the treaty of Utrecht, in 1713, to Victor Amedeus, Duke of Savoy; it was lost and won again by the Spaniards, and by the treaty of Vienna, in 1736, finally disposed of to the Bourbons of Spain, of which race the King of the Two Sicilies belongs.

It still is a bright jewel in any crown; in spite of all its disasters, revolutions, moments of freedom (like that enjoyed under Lord William Bentinck), or struggles against tyranny, there is no finer or more fertile spot in the universe; it requires but the energy of the free and the capital of the industrious, to become the greateat prize in Europe. If Filanghieri had not a voice strong enough for intercession in favour of Sicily, it is hopeless to imagine another *will* succeed; but who can calculate chances? even the Pope has consented to a railway to Frascati, and the Corso has at last been lit by gas; but Ferdinand of

Naples, in giving his royal sanction for extended railways, has stipulated that all the directors shall be Neapolitan, fearing another sulphur question if any English should have *rights* conceded to them, and which rights might be enforced. He must have a strange idea of the common sense of Englishmen, if he imagines that they would trust their capital to Neapolitan directors, and have no voice in its expenditure.

The heavy smoke of the steamer is the signal that the fires are lit, and the white steam issues from the valve. Farewell, fair Sicily ! perhaps I may never re-visit you again ; but you have left engraven on my memory the remembrance of the fairest spot on earth.

# CHAPTER IX.

## THE VETTURINO.

To a man intent upon running through a country, there is no conveyance so annoying as travelling vetturino; to the man who is encumbered with a few ladies, some band-boxes, dress-boxes, bonnet-boxes, and all other sorts and conditions of boxes, and whose time is his own, and his leisure his solace—who need not be back for Term-time, or for patients—who can leave the world to litigate for itself, and the sick to die without having a regular medical passport to that "bourne from which no traveller returns,"—the conveyance by vetturino is by no means disagreeable; it has its inconveniences, and it has its pleasures, besides which it has its instruction. To travel post, is to hurry through life; to travel vetturino,

is to take it easy; by the latter mode you will have ample time to count the fields, and, in all probability, if the traveller is blessed with a fair proportion of God's greatest blessing, "health," he will walk up every slope called a hill, and will have every opportunity of admiring the surrounding scenery.

If he is a sleepy traveller—and many, many carriages have I passed in Italy with every one inside fast asleep—even the everlasting red-covered Murray, which is generally clutched in the hand of the oldest man, becomes useless, and the somnolent awake to ask where they are—and to read up what they have passed unnoticed; but the vetturino cannot go to sleep, and if he be a man who has kept his eyes open during the hundreds of voyages he has made, he is sure to be well-stocked with anecdotes, and he will relieve the monotony of a dull road.

It is particularly requisite that a written agreement should be signed by the contracting parties, and in some cases a caparra, or caution-money, should be paid by the vetturino, to ensure the performance of his contract. A horse may die, as well as his driver; the carriage may break down, and a thousand

incidents may occur, which might give a pretext for evading the agreement; besides which, it prevents the vetturino from hiring himself to another, at a better price, after he has engaged with you; a circumstance which has occurred more than once.

When I first commenced my travels in Italy, my time was my own—I had no necessity to be either in England or France, or anywhere else, by any given time; and I engaged one Candido Mosti, the king of vetturinos, and Mosti himself designated his calling loyal, as will be seen by the following lines, which I overheard him murmuring one morning when the roads were very heavy, and his purse very light—

"Arte vetturino
Arte *reale*,
Vivere felice,
E morie nel' ospidale;"

to which complexion and abode a very great number of the fraternity of Jehu come at last.

Mosti is a short, fat, jolly, clever, agreeable fellow—a man of some money, having a house at Pisa, with a family well educated;

he is the possessor of divers carriages, and about ten horses. I had just been examining the Malle poste to Lyons, with some intention of going to Marseilles, and taking the steamer to Naples, when I was accosted by the merriest-looking, little, fat man I ever remember to have seen.

"Does the signor want a carriage to go *anywhere ?*"

"Yes," I replied; "but I have not made up my mind if I go through Italy to Naples, or go by Marseilles."

"Miserecordia!" ejaculated Mosti; "why, the signor has got a wife and a daughter, and who ever thought of making his whole family sea-sick?"

Here Mosti hit me very hard, and in the most vulnerable part; for never had I mentioned the steam-boat without being affectionately reminded of Johnson's description of a ship, with a trifling addition, namely—"that it was a prison, with a chance of being drowned, with the prisoners *sick*."

"But," said I, "I have so much luggage, that nothing short of the hold of a collier could stow it away."

"Signor," replied the good-tempered Mosti,

"my carriage will carry as much as a ship; come and see it; it is at the Hotel des Bergues."

I went; it was impossible to resist Mosti, he was such a persuasive, well-dressed, affable creature. "*There!*" said Mosti, pointing to a very roomy carriage; "*there!* that carriage will carry all the luggage of the signor, signora, signorina, domestici e tutti quenti."

I looked; it certainly was a large, roomy carriage; but we were four in family, with two servants, and we mustered twenty-four large cases, trunks, boxes, portmanteaus, carpet-bags, hat-boxes, baskets, &c., and of such excessive weight, that although I travelled in France under some favourable circumstances, the extra luggage on the Strasbourg railway cost forty francs, and I had paid seventy-five francs for some *more* boxes which had been sent to Lyons.

"I have seen the carriage," said I; "come now, Signor Mosti, and see the luggage." Mosti came; he saw no difficulties, he had a vache at Lausanne, which he would place on the carriage; he measured with his quick eye the various sizes, and was convinced he could manage it all. "But stop," said I, "there

are yet three large cases as large as that formidable-looking concern now at Lyons, and those must travel with us also." Mosti saw no difficulty; he could arrange everything, do everything, carry everything, and therefore, as far as any difficulties on my part, "non pensa piu," said Mosti.

"But, Signor Mosti," said I, "as yet I have not made out a route, or the time I shall require to remain at each place, or the price."

"If the signor will draw out his plan, and put down where he wishes to remain some time, and how long, I will call to-morrow at nine o'clock, and we can arrange it all—as for the luggage, 'bagatella.'"

Mosti had some of the gesticulation of the Neapolitan, although he held that people in the most sovereign contempt.

By ten the next morning I was an engaged man, and wedded, as far as the contract went, to Mosti, for at least three months. He was to take me over the Simplon to Milan, Florence, Bologna, Rome, and Naples; he was to wait a week at Milan, three weeks at Florence, two days at Bologna, and twenty-eight days at Rome; he was to put up wherever I indicated; and if the ladies felt inclined to remain

a day or two at Parma, Placentia, Modena, or anywhere else, the good-natured Mosti would make no objection whatever ; and the price was to be one thousand four hundred francs, with the buonamano included, although I might, if I thought proper, give anything more which I thought right, in consequence of the stoppages.

The luggage having arrived at Geneva from Lyons, the whole was mustered over-night for inspection, and I frankly own I was ashamed of the burthen to be dragged by four or five horses ; and when I reflected that in my written engagement Mosti had covenanted to pay all tolls, ferries, extra horses, and every charge which could be made, so that, under any circumstances, I was only to pay fifteen hundred francs, I thought I had made rather a good bargain ; besides, I had Mosti, the king of vetturinos, a man who knew everything worth seeing, and blessed with so excellent a temper that even his wife could not provoke him.

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I was sitting by Mosti's side one warm day, as we approached Rome, when he began to laugh to himself with such excessive glee, that I begged to know the cause of this sudden ebullition of Italian humour.

"I was thinking," said little Mosti, "of what strange people a vetturino conveys, of the sulkiness and surliness of some, and the excessive good temper and familiarity of others, who, like yourself (I bowed, of course), whenever you eat, enjoy to distribute alike to inside and outside travellers, and have as much regard for your servants as for yourself. Leopoldo never gets down to put on the scarpa but he returns with a cigar, and ever since I left Geneva, I scarcely have had a chance to smoke one of my own: but this is not always the case; and although I would rather take an engagement at a less reward from an English family, yet I have found one or two rather queer emanations from your country."

"In what respect, Mosti?"

"Why, I once engaged with a celebrated lawyer of yours, who was going to Rome, and being very fond of himself, in more ways than one, had brought with him an English maid-cook, a woman as ugly as a stroppiata, and with as angry a looking countenance as we sometimes see in that blue sky. This lawyer was sitting upon this very box, whilst his wife and the cook seemed like Neapolitans at a

bargain, each endeavouring to talk the loudest in the carriage.

"'I have done a very foolish thing,' said the lawyer; 'I have brought this virago at an increased salary, because she said that she was going to live amongst Catholics, and might *catch* it, as if religion was infectious; and I dare say people contrive to live at Rome just as well as elsewhere. I wish I could get rid of her, although I have paid her two months' wages in advance.'

"'Nothing so easy,' said Mosti; 'do as Solomon did with his cook.'

"'Solomon!' said the lawyer, 'why, I never heard that he had a cook; at least, I never heard that any action was ever brought by Salmi *versus* Solomon; nor is there any reference to such a suit in the statutes at large.'

"'Perhaps not,' said Mosti; 'but notwithstanding your not having ever read of the cook of Solomon, Solomon had a cook, and paid her wages, and recovered the money he had paid by his wisdom, not to mention having himself learnt to make a pie.'

"'Well, Mosti,' said the lawyer, 'just be kind enough to tell me this anecdote, for I am not going to interpose in that quarrel inside,

and if by following Solomon's plan, I can get rid of that she Salmi, I shall read up the Proverbs again.'

"Oop, oop! avante, avante!" went Mosti, and then began to relate to me the story he had told the lawyer, thus:

"You may depend upon it," he began, "that a wise man always has a good cook; for what is the use of riches and wisdom, if you are to sit down and grub at what every poor fellow can afford to eat? the riches are of no use, and the wisdom drivels into folly. We are told, 'to eat, drink, and sleep,' and no man ever did the latter well, without great respect to the former. Now a good cook is requisite in order to feed well—and good feeding is good living—and 'who leads a good life is sure to live well.' Oop, oop, Leopoldo! non vedete la montagna, mettate la scarpa—(the hill magnified into a mountain, was of so gentle a descent, that a boy's hoop would not have run down it, without the stick to freshen its way).—Well, Solomon had a cook, and depend upon it he was a good cook!"

"But how do you know he was a man-cook?" said I.

"Because he was a diligent man; and Solomon says, 'Seest thou a *man* diligent in his *business*, he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.'"

There was no arguing against this argument. So said I, "Well, we will take the reference to the business as a cook's occupation, and forthwith settle that Solomon had a man-cook; but I think I can prove that Solomon had not a man-cook, that is, if you declare he had a man-cook in order to live well."

"Gia, gia," said Mosti; which means, "of course, of course."

"Why, Solomon particularly tells you, 'Be not desirous of his dainties;' now dainties mean, rich dishes."

"Yes," replied Mosti, "and you are told 'to eat honey, because it is good;' and therefore you are to eat what is good. I tell you, Signore Capitano mio, Solomon had a man-cook, and a very good cook he was. Solomon was the wisest man of his time, or any other time, and he was not such a fool as to have riches and eat grass!"

"Go on, Mosti," said I, as the good-natured fellow puffed out his last smoke of the finished

cigar; "we have agreed that it was a man-cook."

"One day the cook went to Solomon and said, 'that he wanted to better himself; that he had saved three hundred piastres.'"

"Holloa!" said I, "how do you know that the cook's wages were paid in piastres?"

"Because Solomon always talks of silver and gold, and never mentions paper money."

"Good," said I; "continue."

"'I have saved,' said the cook, 'three hundred piastres, and I have not seen my wife for twenty-two years, neither have I heard from her, or of her, and when I left her she was *gravida*, *gravidissima*. I want to go home and see her, and then get another place; for allow me to say, Mr. Solomon, that yours is not a very profitable place, although you do say, 'in all labour there is profit.'

"'Now look you, good cook,' said Solomon, 'he that is greedy of gain, troubleth his own house;' and I have told you not to hoard up riches: you have been with me for twenty-two years—you have taken care, of course, to feed yourself well, or you are a greater fool than I thought you were—you have been well clothed, you were housed, had no taxes to

pay, and took no thought of the morrow. Now you propose to better yourself, to give up a positive certainty for a hypothetical possibility; to go back to your wife, who you know had not a good temper; and you should remember, that 'it is better to dwell in a wilderness, than with a contentious and angry woman.'

"'I dare say she has changed her temper now; but, changed or not, there is no place like home; and if you could look out for another cook, and allow me to go this day month, I shall consider it a great favour.'

"'By all means,' said Solomon; 'but remember, he who trusteth in his own heart is a fool!'

"The month was expired, the wages were paid, the cook counted three hundred piastres in good silver, and having packed up all appertaining to him, he turned his back on the palace of the wisest man in the world, and directed his steps onwards towards his own house.——

"Leopoldo, la scarpa! scusi, signore, un momento!" and another cigar was lighted; the usual "oop, oop," was given, the drag had

been hooked, and Mosti, having ascertained that the cigar drew well, continued:

"The cook had not gone a mile towards his home, when he reflected that he had lived years and years with the wisest man in the world and had never asked his advice, and that to return home without some counsel as to his future life, was to insure but a bad reception from his wife, who, when he left her, was rather addicted to passionate expressions. Pondering on this, he retraced his steps, and found Solomon walking in his garden; he advanced without hesitation, and no sooner had he approached the king, than his majesty said—'Why, Salmi, are you returned already? —have you taken counsel of yourself, and learnt wisdom?'

"'I have,' said the cook, 'I have remembered that you are the wisest of men, that your sayings are engraven on every man's heart, and I know that those 'who follow the counsels of the wise shall never fail.' I have, therefore, returned, feeling, from my long service in your numerous family, that I have some claim upon your kindness, and venture to ask your advice as to my future conduct and guidance in life.'

"'You have done wisely,' answered Solomon, 'and I shall assist you; but every man lives by his labours; you have prospered by your art in cooking, and I am esteemed for my knowledge. I paid you for your labours, of course you will pay me for my advice.'

"'A poor cook!'

"'A wise man!'

"'A man who toils for his wages!'

"'A man who reaps wisdom from long sowing!'

"'A poor man with a wife!'

"'A man with 400—no, no, Salmi, I paid you for your work of hand, and you must pay me for my work of head.'

"'And how much am I to give for your advice?'

"'I give my advice in generalities, and I never take less than one hundred piastres.'

"'One hundred piastres! why, it is my savings for nearly seven years.'

"'It is as you like—you have come to seek me, and not I you; what cost you seven years to accumulate, has cost me more than ten years of life to consider; if you pay one hundred piastres, you will 'hear counsel and re-

ceive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in the latter end.' '

" ' If you will not take less, here are your one hundred piastres—and there goes one-third of all my riches in this world.'

" ' Wisdom is wealth,' said Solomon; and after counting his money, for Solomon knew that a man should count money even after his own father, he added, ' Listen, Salmi, and let these words sink deep into your heart. ' *Forsake not the old road for the new!*' Good bye.'

" ' Is that all I am to have for my one hundred piastres?'

" ' And quite enough too, if you do but heed it.'

" ' If I return home with this answer, my wife will rebuke me, and I would rather pay again, and carry with me something which may be more profitable.'

" ' As you like,' said Solomon; ' but I must have another hundred piastres.'

" With a heavy heart, and a sack getting considerably lighter, Salmi counted the one hundred piastres, and awaited the words of wisdom.

" ' Twenty-five—fifty — seventy-five — one

hundred—all right. Be attentive—*Never interfere in matters which do not concern you, for he that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears.*'

"'Two hundred piastres gone, and only a few words, and those none of the newest. I have not now enough to keep my family, and as I am ruined partially, I would rather be ruined entirely; here, take the rest, all I ever saved by honest service—all I shall ever have—take it all, and let me return a beggar.'

"'The labourer is worthy of his hire. You did well with me, and became rich—you would be richer in far better things than silver or gold. You barter the one for the other, like an honest merchant—twenty—forty—sixty—eighty—eighty—one hundred—good. Do not let your mind dwell on this dross, it is gone from you; now, therefore, make the most of that you get in exchange, for wise men lay up knowledge, and wisdom is better than rubies. *Let not the anger of the evening bring fruit until the morrow.*'

"'And is this all, Solomon?'

"'All—remember that an angry man stirreth

up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.'

"'And now I go a beggar and an outcast, without the wherewithal to buy either food or raiment. Farewell, wise man.'

"'Stop,' said Solomon; 'I will shew you that wisdom is gleaned by observation—when you were my cook, I watched your art; go to your old chamber and sleep, ponder well on this day's work; to-morrow, before you set out to return to your wife, I will give you a pie of my own making. Go!'

"On the morrow Salmi received the pie, and entered into a solemn engagement not to open it until he arrived at home, when it was to be enjoyed after the first kiss of recognition and affection; but Solomon gave nothing else; and the cook departed, carrying the pie, and groaning over his folly, although he inwardly vowed he would act up to the words of the wise.

"Salmi had not journeyed far, when he met a friend of his youth, who was returning to the village where Salmi's wife resided, and the conversation was agreeable as to past times; the road was long and wearisome, but the part of the country where the travellers

were was well known to Salmi, but better to his friend.

"'Hulloa, friend!' said Salmi, 'you are going the wrong road, for well I remember this way.'

"'No, no,' said the other, 'this is the new road, the shortest; it is a little more troublesome to get over, but you will save some distance.'

"It was then the first piece of Solomon's advice, which had cost one hundred paistres, occurred to Salmi, and he hesitated.

"'Come,' said his friend, 'we shall gain at least an hour.'

"'Ah!' said Salmi, 'but I know this road, and I do not know that.'

"'We cannot miss the way, come—a whole hour in this heat is worth the chance.'

"'But I am certain of this way.'

"'Then go it,' said the other, as he struck down a narrow path.

"'*Forsake not the old road for the new*,' muttered Salmi, 'and I paid one hundred piastres for that advice, and it would be folly indeed to pay for counsel and disregard it. Courage, Salmi—an hour in life is but a grain of sand in the glass of time;' and he took the

old road, feeling there was wisdom to guide his steps.

"It was a long and wearisome way, and more than once the pauper cook envied his companion, who now, without doubt, had arrived at the inn where he, Salmi, was to arrive without a penny in his pocket; but feeling certain he could always, from his knowledge of cookery, gain enough to live, by doing that better, for which others were paid for doing worse. At last, after a tedious walk, he arrived at the inn, and found the village in an uproar —people talking anxiously, and a general confusion around. 'Here is a traveller,' said one, and the cook was instantly surrounded. Impatience and anxiety were on every countenance, and question after question was asked if he had met with robbers, thieves, assassins or murderers.

"'None whatever,' said the cook.

"'Which road did you come?'

"'The old road.'

"'Ah!' exclaimed one, 'the corpse of a traveller has just been brought into the inn, who came the new road; he must have been set upon, robbed and murdered—for his garments were torn, his pockets empty, and his

throat cut—he is in this house, where the women are wailing.' Salmi looked on the dead—it was the body of his companion. 'Ah!' he ejaculated to himself, 'well have I done to barter my gold and silver for wisdom; if I had not listened to the words of the wise man, I might have lost my money and my life, in order to save a paltry hour's exertion.'

"Lamenting his friend, for Salmi was a kind man, he entered the inn, and calling the host, told him how penniless he was, and offered to instruct the cook in a dish, which would be economical to the landlord and luxurious to his tenants, for which he was to receive board and lodging for that night. The bargain was struck, and the business completed; and now Salmi felt secure, as the next night would take him to his wife's house, she having changed her abode some weeks before.

"The landlord was no niggard—Salmi ate of his own dish and received a flask of wine; other travellers soon filled the adjoining room of the hostelrie, whilst one man, anxious to hear where Salmi had quitted the murdered man, perhaps animated by some suspicion, sat down at the same table with him, and calling for a skin of wine, got into conversation with him;

all suspicion was soon removed, when it was ascertained that Salmi had not a farthing in the world, and had gained his meal by his cooking; and whilst these two drew together as friends over their wine, there arose in the next chamber a violent war of words.

"The stranger listened and became uneasy, but Salmi's face was as tranquil as that of a calm sea. The tumult grew louder and louder; from words the disputants were fast advancing to blows, and the riot was at its heighth.

"'Let us go into the next room and see what this tumult is about; perhaps, by taking one side, we may end it without bloodshed.'

Salmi rose to join his friend, and then instantly re-seated himself.

"'Come,' said his companion, 'we have no time to lose."

"'No,' said Salmi, 'no, it is no affair of mine.'

"'But there will be murder, bloodshed, and all that sort of thing.'

"'It does not concern me,' said the cook.

"'Why you are afraid,' said the other, 'but I am not;' and as he said this, he darted off out of the room.

"'I am not,' said Salmi, 'going to take the 'dog by the ears;'' and he sat still and finished his wine.

"In the meantime, the tumult of words had risen to the clash of weapons: men were shrieking and stamping, and great was the confusion—when the door opened, and his former companion fell down, crippled for life, with the blood flowing copiously from his head.

"'Blessings on thee, Solomon!' said the cook; 'but for thee and thy wisdom I should have allowed my blood to rise, and my curiosity to lead me into temptation. Well have my second hundred piastres been spent; for now, I may live again to make them, but that poor wretch is disabled for ever. I certainly never imagined so much good was in so small an amount of words. I always thought that fine-sounding phrases were wisdom, but now I find that the words of the wise are few.' Then gathering together his robes, and enfolding his pie, he sought the room the host had provided for him.

"Early the following morning the cook was on his road; he pondered much over the loss of his money, and the wisdom of the advice

he had received; but although the latter had saved his life twice, he still mourned for that which had taken years to accumulate, and which had left him now a beggar in wealth, with only a few words of consolation.

"Man is always discontented," said Mosti, as he looked at one of his horses, which evidently was the worse for wear; and well it might have been, for that poor animal had for months and months, without intermission, toiled over the rugged roads of the continent, changed its abode every night, sometimes shut up in hot stables, where no air at all was admitted, at other times exposed to the cold night winds, which came fresh from a frozen mountain. "That horse," said Mosti, "will play me a dirty trick, and die before long."

"And you will have some of Solomon's wisdom to console you," said I. "But the cook?"

"The cook was discontented also; he was afraid to face his wife—whom he had ever loved, notwithstanding her temper—a mere beggar; after years of absence, to return either a burthen to her, or forced to begin anew, and toil and toil, without such a palace over his head as he had left, to better himself. Few know

when they are well off; and the desire of more, is often the step to ruin.

"It was a warm day, and they seldom get a cool one in those countries; the road was bad, and six long hours had Salmi—('I always called him Salmi,' said Mosti, 'after the lawyer had christened him')—continued with unabated vigour, when the heat of the day and the natural fatigue overcame him, and he sat down to rest his weary limbs. Occasionally a traveller passed; some giving a slight mark of recognition, others bustling along, intent upon only themselves. The cook was hungry and thirsty; he had yet three hours' walk to perform, and he felt that inward admonition of Nature which clearly said, 'If you do not nourish me, I cannot support you.' There was the pie—and a very good one it looked—and the cook's fingers seemed itching just to take a little of the ornamental work off. Indeed, Salmi entered into an argument with himself, if this could be considered the violation of his promise.

("And it is thus," said Mosti, turning to me, with his face rather inflated from his vigorous smoking and the eternal interruption of the "oop! oop!" "that most people get into mischief: we are told 'in

the doubt if an action be good or bad, abstain from it;' but when a person knows that the action is bad, and enters into an argument with himself to make it good, he is not far from his ruin.)

"The pie was looked at, and smelt; it was savoury; and what the nose had touched, the teeth had approached; but thirst having a greater preponderance than hunger, he covered up the pie, and learning from a traveller that half a mile further he would find a river, he at once proceeded onwards. Nor was he deceived; there before him was no mocking mirage, there was a river of living waters, and Salmi was not long before his mouth and parched lips were slaked in the clear stream.

"It appeared that Salmi had not been the first at the river that day, for on its banks were the foot-prints of men; and, what was of much more consolation to Salmi, was the proof that human beings had drunk from the same river, and had left a piece of bread, which was very shortly in the cook's hands. 'Ah!' said the cook, 'here I recognize again what my late master said—'Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant;' but I hope the dead are not there.'

"On leaving the river, like a giant refreshed, the cook continued his way until he came to two roads; both were old, so that the one-hundred-piastre-advice was of no avail; he was uncertain, and tired; and, therefore, like a prudent man, he sat down until some one should arrive; nor was it long before a man, coming the road he had followed, overtook him.

"'Friend,' said the cook, 'I am journeying towards the small village of Hippah, can you tell me the way?'

"'I myself am journeying there, and will direct you.'

"'Perhaps you reside there?' said the cook.

"'Man and boy, these thirty years; and every person, from the ruler to the beggar, I think I know.'

("What a curious feeling comes over us," said Mosti, "when, after a long absence, we ask of those we left behind. I never get near Pisa, after a long absence——"

"Oh, never mind Pisa!" said I. "Go on with the cook."

"Gia! gia!")

"The stranger," continued Mosti, with his good-natured smile, for no remark could ruffle

the easy current of his temper, "knew, as he said, every one; and after being as garrulous as an old woman, he mentioned amongst the many arrivals, as the village had expanded in size, even Mrs. Salmi.

"'And what manner of woman is she?'

"'Ah, ah!—so, so: few know, but some say—and I suspect——'

"'Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble, is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint,' thought Salmi; 'and yet this fellow whispers away the confidence, without the expression of a fault.'

"'The house stands at the farthest end of the village, and has a garden, in which more hands have been seen at work than handle a distaff, or make fine linen.'

"Salmi became very uneasy—could she be false? It was true she had never had much of Salmi's company; but she was his wife, and all the poison of jealousy was running in his veins.

"'Fare thee well!' said the stranger; 'I have business in this cottage; the village is before you, the caravansarie on your right-hand: may your way be pleasant, and your welcome sweet!'

"The cook's wrath was great; he knew not why; but he rebuked himself: 'For had I,' said he, 'continued where I was well to do, I should not now have returned with a discontented mind and an empty purse.'

"The sun had now gone down, and before Salmi was the village; even the busy hum of men had become hushed, the short twilight soon changed to night, and the moon was up, in all the splendour of those climates. Salmi considered if he should put up at the caravansarie, or go at once to his *home*. The latter prevailed; and as his companion had so clearly designated the house, he could not well mistake it. With an uneasy, faltering step, partly from fatigue, from anxiety, and suspicion, Salmi passed through the narrow street, and came to the last house on the right-hand side; there was a light burning in the only room which fronted the street, and with the same curiosity that most people examine the seal of a letter before they break it open, so the cook placed himself opposite the house, with a view of reading its outward sign before he broke open the sanctuary. Not long had he waited before he saw a female form pass the light: there is a secret stirring in man's

heart which indicates the object of his love, as fear, and its cold thrill, manifests the presence of a detested being. All nature was alive in Salmi; he saw her to whom he had plighted his faith, he saw her busy at her household occupations alone, and, in the indistinct light, still lovely of form and graceful of motion; but soon the wife turned, as if to answer some other person; and the instant afterwards the cook saw his wife locked in the warm embrace of a man, who imprinted kiss upon kiss upon her lips, and whose kisses were as warmly returned.

"Now it was that all the poisonous effects of the 'few know—some say—but I suspect,' 'corroded every thought, and blasted all Love's paradise.' In a moment Salmi resolved to take most ample revenge upon both, and with the fearful haste of jealousy, he sought his knife, which greedy weapon was concealed beneath his garments. In order to obtain his object, he was obliged to change the pie from one hand to the other, and this moment, small as it was, brought a second of reflection—it was Solomon's pie, given the morning after he had paid for his counsel, and now that counsel broke upon his memory—'*Let not the*

*anger of the evening bring fruit until the morrow;'* nor were these the only words, for Solomon had said—'Go not forth hastily to strife, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof.' The knife was left untouched, but the eyes could not be withdrawn from the scene; for now, as if to challenge the world's censure, his wife came into the clear moonlight, whilst the man's arms encircled her waist, and, from time to time, fondled and caressed her.

"Salmi had the advantage of a dark hedge behind him, into which, rather than under which, he concealed himself, resolved to act up to the great sage's advice, and yet equally resolved to ascertain to whom he was indebted for those marital ornaments which seemed to render his turban uneasy.

"There seemed but little intention of either party to hurry the parting. The night was beautiful and serene, and there was a warmth of love which would defy the slightly chilled air of the night; the heads were close together, so were the lips—there were murmured whispers like Love's treacherous messengers, and there was no doubt of the intimacy, for the man had never relaxed his embrace.

(Sapete, Capitano, that when I told the lawyer this, he said, ‘ If Salmi could have seen that there was a bed in the room, and had another witness, Salmi could have got a divorce ! Can a man get rid of his wife so easily in England ?”

“ I will answer that to-morrow ; go on with the cook, Mosti.”

“ Leopoldo, la rota”—Leopoldo felt the wheel, and gave a most significant look, as much as to say, “ *caldo*.” Mosti looked down the road, and gave a most significant glance, which Leopoldo understood easily to be, “ will it catch fire, before we arrive ?” and Leopoldo’s answer seemed to imply—“ it’s a chance.” I confess I was so much interested in the advice of Solomon, that I did not care a straw if the wheel caught fire or not ; and although one of the inside prisoners declared that she smelt something like smoke, — for women, like dogs, have, as Lord Byron says, “ most intellectual noses,”—I begged Mosti to allow the wheel like the world to go round on its axis, and leave the fire to chance.)

“ Still Salmi watched, and still he witnessed the same scene until some time had expired, when, by a sort of Siamese Twins’ consent, both

parties left the balcony. Salmi now crept across the road, and placed himself at the further angle of the house from the village, so that when his rival came out, he could follow him home, resolving, when the day dawned, and 'the anger brought forth its fruit,' both parties should regret their indiscretion.

"In those times," continued Mosti, "I have some doubt, if they had village clocks, or how they marked their hours; but Salmi, as vigilant as a fisherman in a clear stream, marked the shadow caused by the moon, and knew full well from his tired body, that hour after hour had passed, and that, beyond all manner of doubt, the rival had not been pressed to depart. He rolled himself at last in the mantle of distrust and suspicion, and, in spite of his desire to watch, slept in a field close to the house, and before he awoke two hours of daylight had passed; the door had opened, and a man had gone toward the village.

"'Now,' said Salmi, 'I have well followed the advice of Solomon, excepting as regards this pie; and I am more likely to throw it down this deep well, than ever to eat it with my wife; but justice must be done; my honour, my very name is tarnished, and she must not

live, who has thus injured me.'—(" It was a very easy way," said Mosti, " for a man to get rid of his wife without the lawyer's divorce; much cheaper and more certain; and really when a man has been married for two and twenty years, and never seen his wife, the parting for ever would not be so serious an affair.") Salmi had dissected so many fowls in Solomon's kitchen, that another hen was no great matter; with the pie under the left arm, and his knife well within reach of his right, Salmi crossed the threshold, and stood, according to all modern legal claims, under his own roof, burning for revenge, and yet with some feeling of fear, as he felt he was about to commit a great crime. ' It shall all be as clear as day,' said he to himself. ' She shall defend herself, and I will fairly judge the question.' ' Judith,' he called, ' behold I am here, your husband.' Judith heard the voice, and although somewhat changed, no doubt, from thirst and hunger, she flew to the summons, and was rushing with all a woman's fond affection into his arms. ' Mane in casa,' said Salmi, ' mane in casa, cara mia;' and with his right hand he bade her keep her distance. She stood gazing with astonishment and apprehension. ' Listen,'

said Salmi, ‘ for twenty-two years have I been absent, not to mention some odd days. During that time, although I lived in King Solomon’s house, and saw the fairest of the fair, dressed their dinners, and made their little private suppers; yet I never allowed my eyes to wander over their charms, or my heart to beat with one pulsation false to you. I left my situation three days ago, and I have walked through sands and burning roads again to come to her I loved so well. I arrived last night with a fond lover’s expectation; I watched to see the much-loved figure of my youth; I watched; I saw—I am the living witness of your perfidy?’

“ ‘The what, ungenerous man?’

“ ‘Stop! stop! I have had great experience in your sex, and I know how they throw themselves into fits and faintings, to gain time for their natural cunning to come to their aid; but you shall have justice—you shall be heard.’

“ ‘Speak, thou ungenerous man, who having absented himself for twenty-two years, now makes this frivolous pretence to leave me altogether! But I will condescend to hear your charge, as it is the duty of a faithful, loving wife to do.’

"'By the beard of the great king, this is too much!' said Salmi; 'let us see how a woman's countenance can stand the direct attack of injured innocence and virtue.' It is a fact, Signore, that Salmi prided himself upon his purity, and he drew himself up to his greatest height, as he began: 'Woman, is it true that last night, for at least an hour, a man's arms encircled your waist, and a man's lips imprinted hundreds of kisses?'

"'It is quite true,' said Judith, without allowing a shade of anger to come over her still fine countenance, although it is affirmed that the corners of her mouth betrayed some good-humoured malice.

"'And this man slept in the house last night?'

"'It is quite true.'

"'What further proof of guilt need I have? and yet I would fain allow you time to make your peace with Heaven, before I render justice to myself.' Here Salmi took the pie, and placed it on a table, and with his right hand he produced the long, disagreeable cook's knife, which looked very sharp, and particularly well pointed.

"'And did the wisest man of the world give

you no advice,' said Judith, 'during the long time you were with him? Did he never tell you to love and honour a virtuous wife? did he never say, 'She will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life?' did he never tell you, that 'a man's pride shall bring him low; but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit:' or that 'an angry man stirreth up strife?' But still I love you the more for the very wrath of your love; a man who would sell his soul for ever by the committal of a murder for a false woman, must indeed have loved her sincerely. Now you, who seem to love and cherish me—listen to me—as I have to you: do not be in a hurry, or allow your anger to overcome your reason or your justice. Wait patiently,' she continued, as she looked at the shadow of the sun, 'two hours; if then you are of the same opinion as now, then I will lay my head quietly down, and not murmur even when *you*—you, whom I have so long mourned for in solitude, should kill me. I have not attempted to tell any falsehood; a man did kiss me often and often last night, and slept in the house. I ask you to grant me what I have asked; and Solomon himself has told you not to act upon the impulse of the moment.'

"'I agree,' said Salmi, for these last words were in a great respect the same that Solomon had spoken. 'And yet,' said the cook, 'perhaps this delay is merely that you may see him again before you die.'

"'Exactly so,' said Judith, with the greatest unconcern; 'and I wish you to see him and know him, so that your revenge may fall upon the right person. You are hungry and thirsty; eat and drink.'

"'I will eat nothing in this house but that pie, nor will I wet my parched lips until I open that pie; and as you do not attempt to palliate your fault, it is not in this house my hunger will be appeased, or my thirst assuaged.'

"'Do as you think fit; you are the master here, I but the slave. What is here is yours. I have only the remembrance of my husband.'

"Salmi sat in surly silence; he was uncommonly hungry, and his throat was parched; talking made him worse; every now and then he glanced at his wife, and felt a conviction that his eyes had not deceived him; still there was such a virtuous manner—such a bold, yet not a presumptuous behaviour, that the woman must have been the very devil of cunning to have assumed it.

"'You may prepare your knife,' said Judith; 'I see him coming.'

"Salmi's eyes flashed with the fire of hatred and revenge.

"'Come quickly, come quickly,' said Judith, from the balcony.

"'Infamous, barefaced, unabashed woman!' said Salmi; 'a minute more, and I am revenged.' The door opened, and a young and handsome man rushed into Judith's arms; in a moment, Salmi rushed towards them.

"'Strike!' said Judith; 'now kill your son, his mother, and your wife.' The knife fell to the ground; the mystery was explained; the last one hundred piastres well bartered for that best of all advice; and but few minutes were requisite to see the happiest of men, in the fond embrace of the most virtuous of women.

"'I have brought you nothing but myself, and three sentences of wisdom,' began Salmi. 'I paid all my savings for those three sentences; twice they have saved me from death, and once from being a murderer. I have got a promise to perform, which is to eat that pie at the first feast after I had seen and kissed my wife."

"'Sit down,' said Judith, 'and I and my son will attend upon you.'

"'No, no, I acknowledge your duty; but I honour your affection and love: sit down, and do you, my son, with this knife, take of the pie to your mother.'

"The son, with the impetuosity of youth, dashed the knife through the unresisting crust, the sharp point struck against the bottom of the dish, and shivered it to atoms; it was not the sound of the broken dish which excited the burst of astonishment, but of three hundred piastres in gold, which seemed to leap upon the floor. Of meat and savoury messes there were none; but there was a scroll which had enveloped the gold, and on it was written, 'Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it.'

"'So you see,' said I to the lawyer, 'you can get your cook into a lawsuit, and take out the extra wages, and all her wages in advice.'"

Mosti's story terminated just as we arrived at the Porta del Popoli. So we will commence a new subject with a new chapter.

# CHAPTER X.

## ROME.

I WAS not much astonished at the curious gaze of the Romans, when Signore Mosti, with his double diligence, as our vetturino affair might be termed, stopped at the Porta del Popolo, whilst a search was made for our lasciar passare.

Italians have a very vague meaning of meum and teum, and bright and vigilant as were the eyes of us all, and perfectly on our guard as we were, for we always took especial care to close the window of the carriage on that side from which we did not descend, yet my "wide-awake," a most suspicious-coloured, revolutionary-looking covering, had not been out of my hand one moment at Bologna, before it covered the crazy brains of

some disreputable Bolognese. Mosti had both his eyes open, and so had I; we walked round and round the carriage, and ultimately landed the whole twenty-seven boxes, trunks, and cases, safe in the Hotel de l'Amerique, Via Babuino.

It was Sunday, and about three o'clock, although we had only come from "Sette Vene" that day, and had experienced no other alarm than that occasioned by two of the Pope's gendarmerie à cheval, who, with more rudeness than gallantry, ordered us to stop to let a cardinal pass, and had recourse to the sinking case twice; the rest of the party preferred making themselves comfortable, to sight-seeing.

It was clear to me that my friend Mosti and his nephew were no admirers of the government which was directed by the church authorities; whenever we came to a bad part of the road, the "maledetto" was growled out; and in compliment to those to whom they were obliged to lift the hat, and draw on one side to let pass, they invariably called it a "Via Cardinale." I must, in respect to Mosti's local knowledge, here mention, that he gave me more useful wisdom concerning the Ro-

mans than ever I picked up before during the course of my juvenile education.

"If you see a shadow close to your own, step aside instantly."

"If you have any respect for your handkerchief, don't air its end, by letting it dangle from your pocket."

"Always carry small money in your pocket —and never carry a purse."

"Beware how you ride a horse over the Roman pavement, and how you stop when on foot to look into a shop in the Corso; you may get a broken skull by neglecting the first, and be lighter by disregarding the second."

"Do not believe the cardinal virtues exist because there are plenty of cardinals."

"Never strike a Roman; you may 'spit in his face, and call him horse;' but knives are easily concealed, and quickly used."

"Never get in the dark streets or narrow lanes after dark; and if you must walk there, always keep in the middle of the road."

"Avoid the whispers of licentious men; they are at every corner, their avocation is as disreputable as their company is dangerous; what the law prohibits, may sometimes become

more general from the very prohibition; and those who pander for the maintenance of sin, frequently fall into crime."

"It is a bad plan to be late at the table-d'hôte. Early hours are good for the hungry, or the vetturino driver; the early bird gets the choice grain."

"If you are asked any price for a horse, be it by a prince or a dealer, do not fancy you will insult him by offering much less—he will honour your knowledge, and accept the proposition."

"Look well at the vase before you purchase it; flaws in china, like Roman virtue, are only discovered by the closest inspection."

"Do not believe that every woman who enters a church goes to say her prayers; she will cross herself devoutly, but her eyes are not always fixed on the altar."

"Never look at those who wish to conceal themselves; a pretty woman never wears a veil a lover's eye cannot see through."

"If you hire a carriage and horses during your stay at Rome, hire them from *me;* I shall make a handsome profit, and you will save money."

"Never mount high up if you are likely to

be giddy; many a man falls, from exalted notions of himself."

These, and a thousand more, I heard dovetailed into anecdotes, as we journeyed along the road. Mosti was the most entertaining journeyer along the high-road of life I ever knew; one of his maxims is well worth remembering throughout Italy—"If there is a broil in the street, turn into the next, although it is out of your way; you may be picked up as an evidence, or imprisoned on suspicion of assisting the tumult." That is as well worth a record as that in Paris—"Whenever you see a fire get away as fast as you can, or you will be forced to hand the buckets until the Pompiers arrive." Very often these scuffles are got up purposely to entice the curious, when they are uncomfortably hustled, quite unintentionally, *of course*, but have to ask the hour of the day from anybody else's watch but their own.

I had never been in Rome before in my life; all I knew of it externally, I had seen from the mast-head of a frigate during the last war. My curiosity to see the interior of St. Peter's, the vast cupola of which had fixed my young

attention, soon made me leave the hotel, and strike across the Corso to the banks of the Tiber—there I saw the church, and required no guide to take me to its splendid doors.

As I approached this famous Basilica, the building of which extended over the reign of forty-three popes, and occupied nearly 350 years in its construction, I confess I was far too much excited to scrutinize Forsyth's remarks or Maderno's works; but I did think ten millions sterling a large sum, even for this splendid conception of Bramanti, Michael Angelo, and the so-much-abused Maderno. It is objected to this last, that he deviated from the Greek cross plan of Michael Angelo, and returned to the Latin cross design of Raphael; and that the "concealment of the dome, which is so much hidden by the front, that there is no point of the Piazza from which it can be combined in its full proportions with the rest of the fabric."—Poor Carlo Maderno! Byron was right, when he said "Critics are ready made."

I went up the steps in a very irreverend manner, for I did not walk up with that grave, measured step which it would be indecorous to deviate from in pious London; but I ma-

naged two at a time, and never looked back when I got to the top, nor turned my eyes to the right or the left—passed the huge unsightly statues of St. Peter and St. Paul without notice, nearly upset a score of beggars, and stood within "This eternal ark of worship *undefiled*." I beg leave slightly to object to the truth of this poetry of our great poet.

Most people declare with Byron, "Enter, its grandeur overwhelms thee not;" that was not the case with me, and I attribute it to the effect produced by this splendid church being at that moment illuminated behind the great altar; thousands of lights, like so many bright stars, attracted the eye; and thus the heavy, hulking saints, colossal in legs, with a glorious disregard to fair proportions—muscular where muscles ought not to be, and looking more like infuriated foot-ball players than the mild preachers of the gospel, were unnoticed.

There was a considerable crowd in the church, but none praying, unless they did it internally, and allowed the heart to speak without any motion of the lips. Here were what we are good enough to pray for, "all sorts and conditions of men," and women also; they seemed just as much in expecta-

tion of a sight as myself, and certainly not awed into reverential silence. There was a very unwholesome expectoration, and if this is not defiling the temple, what is? it required a careful examination before the most devout could kneel.

As there seemed to be a general buzz, sweetly intermingled with the cries of children, and the hawking and spitting of men, I took the liberty of adding the soft intonations of my musical tongue, and inquired why the church was illuminated—and why we were all assembled? for although there was no one saying prayers, there were evidently great preparations for a concert.

In the rear of the baldacchino, or grand canopy, which stands directly under the centre of the grand dome, covering the grand altar, which is placed over the sepulchre of St. Peter, there were a crowd of the clergy, musical stands and books, big fiddles, and all sorts of twisted wind instruments, to make a proper noise. The right-hand side of the church, where the *black* St. Peter sits so complacently to have his toe kissed, was kept clean by the church militant; and when the pope, whoever he may have been, who selected the

regimentals for his guard, fixed upon that half harlequin, half clown uniform, he must have dreamt of an English pantomime, and blended every colour into the inexpressibles.

I was told, the pope was coming, in full dress, to bless us all—here was a chance; here was I, who certainly had earned a year or two's absolution and indulgence by the number of aves and paters I had said at the various crosses whereon was written the number of days' indulgence for each ave or pater, in my travelling dress—a kind of workhouse suit as to colour, and shooting-jacket as to cut—standing, half-an-hour after my arrival in Rome, under the great dome of St. Peter's, going to be blessed by the pope! I immediately set myself in the best order I could, taking good care to keep my right hand in my right pocket, for Mosti's maxims were engraven on my memory; and I certainly did not think that the congregation came to the church in the pious hope of getting nearer to heaven by their religious observances on earth.

I had time now to look about me, and I began my observation on the dome; it requires the eye of an eagle to make out the

mosaic of the Almighty at the distance of four hundred and five feet—the globe and cross which are on the top of the baldacchino, are only ninety-four feet from the pavement, and they look small at that distance; even the statues in the lower niches, which are sixteen feet in height, appear nothing more than natural, and St. Veronica, like many other ladies, looks better at a distance. It is marvellous, how quickly time flies when the mind is engaged; what with looking up at the dome, and looking down to St. Peter, with now and then a suspicious look at my companions, and an occasional changing of place to get into company who had not dined upon garlic, the hour I had to wait passed like a second, and a flourish of trumpets outside announced the arrival of God's vicegerent upon earth. As he entered, the music began, and the voices joined in the harmony; there was a little more respect in the assembly, many knelt down, and as he passed all bowed; as his holiness advanced, he blessed everybody.

Pio Nono, who began all the revolutions, does not look like a reformer or a warrior—neither does he give the idea of a firm, reso-

lute man; he is rather short, by no means dignified, excepting when he gives the blessing, and then his voice and manner make a very great impression. If he is a very clever man, I would not give a fig for Roget's facial angle, or all the combinations of Combe, Lavater, Spurzheim, or anybody else, who ever wrote upon Craniology, Physiognomy, Phrenology, or any other onomy or ology; and if he is a firm man, straight-mouthed, thin-lipped men may look in a glass and doubt themselves. There is something very mild and beneficent about the pope, but there is nothing very dignified or impressive. He continued his advance to where I stood; I was in the foremost line, next to the soldiers, and I had a good, steady observation of him before he came opposite to me, when, in order to be more respectful, I took my hand from my pocket, and bowed, as every man ought to bow to a sovereign when he is in his dominions, whatever may be his creed or his political opposition to him.

Unguarded mortal that I was, in my excitement and curiosity I had forgotten Mosti's maxims, and at the very moment when the pope was blessing me, and all around me, and

I bowing my head in reverence to the high authority before me, a caitiff wretch preferred my pocket-handkerchief to his own salvation; his greedy claws had seized their prey—there was an indecorous movement behind me; who at that moment could turn from him who held the keys of Heaven—or cease to regard the Catholic representation of Christ on earth? nay, who—be he protestant or heretic—can look on all this worldly scene of grandeur in that church—

> "With nothing like to thee,
> Worthiest of God—the Holy and the true,"

and not feel humbled—not feel a certain awe and reverence, a profound submission, a conscientiousness of the great imposing ceremony, a certain thrill of religious fervour, an admiration?

Far be it from me to detract from these religious rights and offices, or attempt to ridicule what many regard with favour, and none can despise. It is doing homage to the Lord; it is all poor, weak man can imagine as giving an idea of his submission, or of honouring the Prince of princes; and these great and imposing ceremonies are more calculated to work

upon minds incapable of adoration without pomp—or prayer without excitement. There is something wonderfully impressive in the scene—the music's reverberation through this magnificent temple, the prostration of thousands; one man alone erect, and he the supposed vicegerent of the Lord, holding on high that in which the Divinity itself is enshrined, and in his clear, deep voice pronouncing the Holy Trinity.

Above is all that man can do to imitate the heavens in its blaze of light; below are the worshippers of Him who led captivity captive, prostrate on the earth, not daring to lift their eyes; there is a silence, an awful silence, as the smoke from the censer rises, and shrouds, as it were, the elevated host; and there is a sublime dignity in the words which close the captivating ceremony. I confess I felt excessively overcome.

I wonder where that vagabond expects to go to hereafter, who filched my property? what a disregard he must have had for the pope, and his blessing! unless, indeed, he thought the blessing sanctified the deed. I was uncommonly annoyed. I never bargained for being robbed in such a church, in such a mo-

ment; and as I might have failed in another of Mosti's maxims, of "not being late at the table-d'hôte," I left the Basilica, and returned to the hotel.

After dinner, Mosti came to arrange about the carriage during our stay at Rome, and take leave of us for a month. I told him my adventure in the church; he shrugged his shoulders, and carelessly observed, "If a man wants to find a frail woman, or a pickpocket, the churches are their rendezvous."

The next day, having taken a few precautions, I revisited St. Peter's, and this time it looked as if it had considerably shrunk in its proportions, as there was scarcely a soul in it. I had full time and space for my observations, all of which are just as well in my diary as here; but even the most unsentimental traveller cannot stand in that most splendid of all churches and not be carried away with enthusiasm, especially if he places himself under the dome, and escapes breaking his neck in viewing its immensity, and its mosaics.

I was much amused at the fervour with which old and young kissed the bronzed toe of St. Peter, which has been kissed so often, that it is well polished. Of those of the

better class, as the china of society is called, not one kissed it; a man's faith must be immense, if he imagines this elderly gentleman in a chair, with his right foot extended, to resemble in the least the great apostle to whom the keys of heaven were given; there certainly is not the smallest resemblance between the colossal gentleman of stone at the door and this dark-looking bronzed figure; and the pious are left, like the boy who paid his penny for a peep at the show, to select which they like for the saint.

We are told by men who are some authority, that the bronze is the identical statue of Jupiter himself, humbled down into St. Peter. As there is considerable doubt expressed by other learned men, if St. Peter was ever in Rome or not, although you are shown his grave; so it may fairly be doubted if this statue played the part of Jupiter Capitolinus —or if his bronzed remains were worked up by St. Leo into the apostle. It certainly signifies very little which it was—or is; the statue has got his right foot extended, and Pio Nono extends his in the same fashion, when plenty of the devout kiss his toe in the Sistine chapel; and the statue seems to invite

its votaries to the submission, which Jupiter never did, at least, I never remember any record of such an act. One short, little, dumpy woman was lifted up to kiss St. Peter's toe, and being rather heavier than was anticipated, slipped through the hands a little, and got such a graze of the nose, that she had her eyes full of tears in a minute. It might make St. Peter of more importance if he were seated in the chair called after his name, in the Tribune; and as the church tradition declares, that in this very bronze chair St. Peter sat himself, this would be consistent to have his bronze Jupiter likeness placed therein. How any man can reconcile all these contradictions and improbabilities, is beyond me.

It is strange, that in wandering round this extensive building, dedicated to God, the mind receives no religious impression;—the visitor goes from the mausoleum of Paul III. to Canova's monument of the Stuarts; he may gaze on the baptismal vase of Porphyry, which made a part of the tomb of Otho XI., or feast his eyes on cherubs six feet high; he may wonder at the magnificent mosaic of the Crucifixion of St. Peter, from the picture of Guido; or, mounting the cupola, devote his

attention to the four medallions of the Evangelist, and judge of their proportions from the pen of St. Mark, which is six feet in length; he may admire the great altar, and count the one hundred and twelve lamps, which are burning night and day; descend the double staircase, and admire the kneeling statue of Pius VI., by Canova, or fix his astonished eyes on Francesco Vanni's oil painting on slate, of the fall of Simon Magus; he may see the work of Thorwaldsen in the tomb of Pius VII.; or in the Capella del Coro hear religious music, and see religion acted: but it will never enter his heart as *religion*; it is a show—a great and magnificent show, where the actors are popes, sculptors, painters, and where the brain is bothered or burthened with the remembrance of Leos, Alexanders, Piuses, Innocents, Clements, Gregories, Canovas, Bernini, Rossis, Algardis, Thorwaldsen, Raphael, Guidos, Roncalli, Giotto, Penna, Giulio Romano, Camuccini, and thousands of others in this Trinity of the Arts, and where, after walking for hours, you only get more confused from the rapidity by which one object is supplanted by another, and one beauty eclipsed by its successor.

But turn which way you will, the over-grown hurly-burly saints meet the eye, and contribute, by their enormous size, to rob the church of its fair proportions; they might have made them of more convenient stature, and thus have placed some of the one hundred and ninety-two saints, which are now on the entablatures of the colonnades, under shelter from the winds and the rains; but walk—and walk—for hours, and return day after day, you will never be convinced you have seen the half, nor will you be able to carry away in your memory what you have seen. That being the case with the interior, it is as well to visit the exterior—and in so doing provide yourself with an order; but if you are a gentleman, and have nothing feminine about you but your beardless chin, look into the Grotte Vaticane, and take a survey of the place and its subterranean chapel; you will get amongst the tombs of the martyrs, be very close to the resting-place of St. Peter—if ever he were at Rome; and you will find tombs of Kings of England who never figured in our royal calendars; here you have Charles III., James III., and Henry IX. It is very convenient to make kings and emperors after they are dead,

and thus we have now a Napoleon II., who never could get beyond an imaginary duke-dom whilst living. What possible objection there can be to women being excluded from this show every day in the year but one—Whitsunday, and on that day the men are denied admission—I cannot conceive; for you may dawdle about, paired like parrots, in any other part of the church, and whisper your love—or quarrel, without interruption even from the greatest admirer of conjugal felicity.

If anybody fancies, when he is standing in front of St. Peter's, and fulminating his criticism against the façade, as at variance with the original design, that he is going to undertake some very great difficulty in getting to the summit of the church, he will be mistaken; the road aloft is merely a gentle gradient—a horse would trot up it, and a Swiss donkey look at it with delight. Fat men puff a little at the very beginning, and fine ladies, encumbered with fans, handkerchiefs, flounces, and fashions, give deep sighs; but the latter are soon reconciled when they see that this ascent is not undertaken always by the vulgar, but that sovereigns, princes, and such leaders of nations and society, have actually thought

it not beneath their dignity to undergo the fatigue. There is nothing that fashion will not reconcile; I have known a very religious and exemplary lady emerging from the church overwhelmed by the denunciation of a popular preacher, forget the text and its application, in which she had been absorbed, and stop in good society to see a duchess, and a very fat one too, get into her carriage.

The horse or the donkey would not be available after arriving at the roof; if you look down from this point, and consider the facility with which you have surmounted the distance, it will give you some courage, as you survey the enormous dome, the diameter of which is one hundred and ninety-five feet, and cast your eyes upwards to the ball, which is some four hundred and thirty-four feet from the pavement below; but you rest frequently, and twice you enter the interior of the dome to behold the mosaic work, which now in your vicinity looks coarse, miserable patch-work: it is like a beautiful piece of scene-painting—complete, exact, surprizing in the distance, but a loose daub when approached: those on the pavement of the church, who look like so many black flies walking about, see only

in St. Mark's six feet pen a very proper-sized goose-quill, and wonder at the magnificence of the mosaic from below. To preserve in the memory the beauty of the paintings, the visitor had better never mount to these galleries and witness the deception; but it is here that the mind can best comprehend the enormous structure, and appreciate the talent of him who imagined and constructed it. It seems almost impossible that such a mass could be upheld by only four piers, although these immense supports are two hundred and thirty-four feet in circumference; and yet it looks light from its beautiful proportions, and firm and steady in its grandeur.

The staircases now become a little more *rapid*, as the French say, and this part of the ceremony is not the most pleasant of the performance, especially, as in my case, if you have to push up a female form, however light and graceful it might be; but at last we arrive at the ball, and reluctantly hold fast to the railing, which forms the outer security of a gallery, from which the view is to be studied. Some people lean back, as if shuddering at the height from which they might fall; others stand more boldly forward; but all seem to clutch

the railing. There is a small iron Jacob's ladder, which leads into the ball ; but the aperture is rather small, and one rather fat gentleman got jammed in it. As nobody was in the ball, although it will hold sixteen people, he bellowed in vain—no one below could assist him ; fortunately he had not got his arms through, or he might have been fixed like the extended arrow of a harpoon, and he did not dare exercise any gymnastics with his legs, or he might have come down by the run ; he was afraid to go onwards, lest once in the ball he could not get down again, and he found it no small difficulty to work himself back whence he came.

The ladies, of course, were determined to get in, but it could not be done without placing one at the foot of the ladder, relieving guard, to keep away the curious, as the other ascended ; in spite of the tittering of some French soldiers, who seemed remarkably inquisitive, they managed with their light forms, but flowing robes, to sit or pray inside of the ball, at the summit of St. Peter's.

How age can unnerve a man! and what a vast difference there is between physical and moral

courage. Men who despised death and faced every danger in the battle-field, have been known to run away from a rat; they call that cowardice, by the name of antipathy.

It is now many years ago that a midshipman, one of those dare-devil boys whose nerves were strung to any danger, mounted the cross on the top of St. Peter's, and actually stood erect upon it. A gust of wind might have hurled him headlong to inevitable death; but there he stood, in spite of the giddy height, and afterwards descended in perfect safety, leaving his handkerchief as a record of his daring; there was no pickpocket of the church or the Corso bold enough to take that. This midshipman rose through the different grades of the service, performing many and many a gallant action—for few men saw more fighting, and none exhibited more courage—until he became an admiral.

The peace had changed his life, from scenes of activity and danger to domestic quiet and a wife, but he still sighed for employment; and at last, as the garden of Eden, the Admiralty, had exhausted the standard fruits, this gallant, excellent, kind, and brave officer acquired a

command. The war broke out, there was no man more forward, no man more eager to face the enemy, and, in conjunction with some ships of our ally, he appeared off a Russian port; there lay two frigates of the enemy, the fortifications were not very imposing, the place was reconnoitred, and it was resolved to attack it. Now came the necessity of moral courage, the physical had been beyond doubt; he was the commander-in-chief of the station, he *might* fail, his ships might be crippled by the batteries, or sunk, for anything may occur in war, and then our trade might have severely suffered. At this moment he had no resolution; he had neither the requisite courage to face the danger or withdraw from it, and he committed suicide the very night before the attempt was to be made. One would suppose that, at any rate, he would have made the attack; and there was plenty of time, if he failed, to commit the rash act, if he feared that bugbear, "responsibility." But he is not alone: many officers—Collingwood, for instance—as brave as a lion in the fight, are more afraid of "responsibility" than a child of a ghost.

Look down upon Rome—the "lone mother

of dread empires;" what a heap of churches it appears, how yellow and muddy the Tiber looks, how indistinct are all the temples and arches, even the Colosseum is hard to distinguish; but the ruins beyond the city are conspicuous enough; there, in the far distance, is the sea, and the vessels plainly to be seen without the aid of a telescope, giving life and animation to the scene, in lively contrast with the apparently dreary and desolate Campagna; but it is a beautiful, far-extending view, which the Apennines bound on the one hand, and the Mediterranean on the other.

Time flies fast when the eye, enchanted with this grand natural panorama, is constantly attracted by new objects, or eager for the discovery of some known spot; and whoever mounts to the ball of St. Peter's, on a clear day, will find, by the time he returns to the pavement, that more than three hours of his life may have been passed most pleasantly, and that he may retain in his memory for years the recollection of that far-extended and beautiful view. I would recommend every traveller to make this the first of his sights; for with a map of Rome spread before him, and seeing

at once every place, he becomes, as it were, already initiated into the recesses of the city, and may dispense with the intrusion and the annoyance of a guide.

# CHAPTER XI.

## BEATRICE CENCI.

In the Barberini Palace, at Rome, is preserved the *supposed* original drawing of Beatrice Cenci; I say *supposed*, not that I doubt its originality, but because there is a portrait of this celebrated woman in England, the owner of which asserts his to be the true Guido.

It is extraordinary, the interest which always attaches itself to misfortune or crime; and in no family history are to be found more fresh and more revolting circumstances than are attached to that of the Cenci.

When Francesco Cenci, the father of the unfortunate Beatrice, lived, noblemen in Rome had regular attendants of bandits and assassins, and Sextus V. took a rather original

mode of informing these nobles that he was resolved, if possible, to put down that power which enriched itself by thefts and murders. The persevering endeavours of this pope, who rose from a common shepherd to be the head of Christianity, after the death of Gregory XIII., had already excited the resentment of the nobles, who, accustomed to despise and intimidate the popes, maintained themselves and their armed hordes, and committed every species of atrocity; but they found in the shepherd pope, who as a Franciscan friar had entered into the church, the firmest and most resolute of monarchs.

Sextus V. invited the heads of the noble and illustrious families of the Orsinis, Colonnas, Savellis, Cencis, Contis, and others to the Vatican, receiving them with his usual courtesy, and engaging them in conversation upon the disgraceful state of the country, the frequent murders and robberies, and the impossibility of securely walking the streets, or travelling the roads. The nobles shrugged their shoulders, and seemed to treat the conversation with indifference, secure, as they imagined, in their lawless power. Suddenly

the pope drew his company to one of the windows of that superb palace which overlooks the city of Rome, and pointing out their different palaces, begged them to remark something singular on their summits and turrets. During the visit of the nobles, the pope had sent an armed force, entered every palace, and hung all the ruffians, thieves, and bandits, attached to the different signors. The nobles found their master in Sextus V.; but however much such an example checked the evil, it did not efface it, for the hired bandits of Francesco Cenci were only somewhat reduced by the above act of energy in the pope.

Francesco Cenci, in the year 1585, was amongst the richest of the Roman nobility, in the triple division of the Monte Giannicolo, one part of which was called the Monte Vaticano in Borgo, where the church of St. Peter stands; another, Montorio in Trastevere; and the third, Monte di Cenci, may be found a sufficient proof of his affluence. How this affluence was acquired, although much was inherited, it is not my intention closely to investigate, but in his library were found one or two notes, thus—"For the adventure and sudden turn of fortune of Toscanella, 3500

zecchini, and it was not dear." * "For the undertaking of the assassins of Terni, 2000 zecchini, and they were robbed." † These entries are the more curious, as Francesco Cenci rarely entrusted any with his secrets. After the sudden act of justice of Sextus V., Francesco Cenci retired to the Rocca della Petrella, on the border of the Neapolitan territory, and which he held in fief from the Prince Colonna.

It is requisite clearly to understand the history of the picture of Beatrice, to give a general outline of the character of Francesco. His father was the minister of finance under Pius V.; this pope devoted his time to the extirpation of heresy, and the re-establishment of the Inquisition, leaving his ministers to arrange the other affairs of state; and as the father of Francesco was not over-scrupulous, he contrived to leave to his son the comfortable income of 320,000 Roman scudi per annum. Francesco is described as a man of immense strength, remarkably good-looking,

* "Per le avventure e peripazie di Toscanella, 3500 zecchini, e non fu caro."

† "Per l'impresa dei Sicari di Terni, 2000 zecchini, e furono rubati."

and of wonderful talent and sagacity. He was tall, well-made although thin, with a great expression of the eyes, the upper lids of which fell; his smile pleasing, but his lips thin; but when he met an enemy, that smile changed, the eye became brilliant, the lips compressed, and few would wish to have encountered him, for his reputation for courage was as great as his crimes; and in those times, the character of a libertine did not weigh heavily against him: as notorious as he was, others were nearly as bad.

When Francesco retired to Petrella, he left his wife and children in Rome, and happening to meet a certain Annetta Riparella of Vittiana, a girl of great beauty, who resisted his amorous propositions, he murdered her, and this murder, in a great measure, led to his own, for which Beatrice was afterwards executed. It happened that this Annetta had a lover named Marzio, a native of Aquila, one of those many people in those days, who having fled from their creditors, devoted themselves to the active employment of a brigand, frequently adding to the crime of highway robbery that of murder. When Marzio found the body of his beloved, suspicion fell upon

Francesco Cenci, and an oath of revenge was taken, and, as will be seen, kept by Marzio. He summoned his fellow brigands, and some expressions which fell from a shepherd, whose sheep were not far from the corpse, convinced the whole banditti that Francesco Cenci, baulked of his endeavours, had committed the murder; they all declared their willingness to assist Marzio, and proposed instantaneous revenge. But Francesco was not doomed to fall then; his servant, Olimpio, at that time faithfully attached to him, had heard the declaration of the shepherd, and surmised the intention of the banditti; on his relating it to Francesco, the master and servant immediately fled to Naples, and afterwards returned to Rome. The horde of assassins attacked the Rocca Petrella, and pillaged it; but Marzio, not contented with this, swore another and a more desperate oath, that he would be revenged.

Francesco Cenci married Virginia, of the family of the Santa Croces, one of the richest in Rome; the historian of the life of Beatrice Cenci denominates her as an angelic creature. By her Francesco had six children, four sons, Giacomo, Cristoforo, Rocco, and Bernardo;

and two daughters, Margharita and Beatrice; the latter more closely resembled the mother, but she was more slim of form, and more active of disposition.

Francesco's wish was to himself a law; he travelled unaccompanied, and on horseback; he cared not what dangers awaited him on the road; he was quick of sight, strong of arm, and indomitable in courage; he paid handsomely wherever he went, and was beloved by the avaricious; those who crossed his path, or frustrated his intentions, he either poniarded himself, or devoted to his Sicari. He was in the hands of justice more than once for his lawless libertinage, and on one occasion paid 200,000 zecchini to avoid punishment; and such was his open scorn of all religion, that he narrowly escaped the Inquisition under Pius V. In order to convince this fearful tribunal how sincere he was in his devotion, he built a church in the court of his own palace.

The sons of Francesco, seeing the cruel usage of their father towards their mother, began to grow troublesome, by espousing her cause; they were sent to Salamanca, in Spain, to be educated, but, in fact, to be neg-

lected, and, if possible, to be disposed of effectually.

The popes died quickly in those times, and we are now arrived at the reign of Clement VIII., Ippolito Aldobrandini, in whose days Francesco Cenci gave a grand entertainment in his garden at Rome, situated close to the church of St. Stefano Rotondo; at this fête there was one Lucrezia Petroni, who, to see with the Cenci's eyes, was to be enamoured. This lady, the fairest of the fair—for her biographer mentions the wonderful whiteness of her skin,* her beautiful development, her attractive manner — was thirty-seven years of age; Francesco Cenci at that time being forty. It was in vain the eyes of Francesco were riveted upon this Lucrezia; his crimes, his libertine manners were too well known, and she was far too virtuous to be thus assailed; besides, Francesco was married, and his wife was beloved and pitied by all. The cold reception of his glances only increased their fire; Francesco resolved to succeed, and he was a firm believer in the proverb, "They can conquer who believe they

* "Questa donna fu di una rara bellezza, è celebre per la *stupenda* bianchezza della sua carne."

can." Lucrezia, on her part, was more disgusted than pleased, by the marked attention of her host; for the character of any woman in Rome must have suffered, had Francesco Cenci been marked in his attentions.

Virginia was not slow to perceive her rival in Lucrezia; she felt what little love the Cenci ever showed towards her, now almost lost, and she experienced the remorse of those, who having fearlessly done their duty, and resolutely kept firm in their faith and love, see the man they still admire at last devoted to another; she had been spared the sight of her other rivals, this one was under her own roof. She herself had been greatly admired, and the sonnet of Gaspero Lanci to Virginia Santacroce Cenci is yet in existence; it was published at Bologna, towards the close of the sixteenth century, in a work called "Per Donne Romane rime diverse;" and in this collection we find the beauty of the family of the Cenci in many of its name celebrated by the pen of Giulio Morigi and Gaspero Lanci; this last has also a sonnet on Lucrezia Petroni. Virginia's ears and eyes were proof against all poetry, and all advances; she was the model of a Roman mother, but this did not prevent

the death of Gaspero Lanci, who was found one morning murdered under the gateway of the Cenci palace.

There is no proof, but there is a suspicion, that Francesco Cenci had felt a pang of jealousy, the last record of love, and had disposed of his rival, as he had disposed of many others. He now determined to remove his wife, and thus to obtain Lucrezia.

A few months after the fête before mentioned, there was a magnificent funeral in the church of San Tommaso, the parish church of the Palazzo Cenci, and Virginia was consigned to her tomb; she had been poisoned, and by her husband; the drug was administered in a glass of wine. The victim, on drinking it, asked whence it came, for it was very bitter? She was told her palate was diseased, and she died; both daughters remembered the fact, but the secret was buried in her tomb.

Francesco now began to exercise a complete tyranny in his household; he organized a surveillance over his two daughters, so as to exclude them from all communication outside of the palace; but Margharita, who felt convinced that her mother had been murdered, felt little disposed to remain with a father to

whom crime was as familiar as his meals; she was now seventeen years of age, and Beatrice ten.

In spite of the vigilance exercised, Margharita contrived to get a memorial addressed to and delivered to the pope, in which she carefully abstained from any hint concerning her mother's death, but implored the pope either to provide her with a husband, or to bury her in a convent, for that under her present tyranny she could not exist.

Clement was much moved by this application, more especially as the character of Francesco was of fearful celebrity; he therefore contracted a marriage between Carlo Gabbrielli, of the noble family of Gubbio, and Margharita Cenci, the latter receiving, by the pope's order, a very handsome dowry.

The wife dead, Margharita married, there remained but Beatrice and Bernardo at this time. Francesco overcame the scruples of Lucrezia Petroni, and married her, and for the moment peace and tranquillity reigned in the palace of the Cencis; but outside arose a storm. Francesco, having sent his sons to Spain, took care not to supply them with the money he had promised them, in order that

they might contract debts, be thrown into prison, or retained as security for payment. These young men having heard of the death of their mother, and finding their letters for remittances unnoticed, resolved to return to Rome; exasperated against their father, they actually begged their way along the road, and arrived safely at their father's palace; he, enraged at this filial insubordination, turned them out, declaring that his sons were at school in Salamanca, and that these were vagabonds and impostors. The sons had recourse to the pope, who would not entirely support their claim, on account of their disobedience to their father; but he fixed a moderate annual stipend, which Francesco was obliged to pay: he was by this payment freed from his sons, who sought their own livelihood as best they could.

The few months' tranquillity after the marriage passed away, and Lucrezia soon began to hate the man to whom she was married; he had fallen back into his former disreputable life, and insulted his wife in his reckless abandonment of her, and in the actual profanation of her own room.

Lucrezia was no Virginia; she could hate

thoroughly, and the poisonous seed of jealousy had taken deep and permanent root. In the midst of this growing hatred Francesco Cenci was suddenly arrested for some heinous offence, and cast into prison; and instead of intercessions from his family, the whole, with the exception of Beatrice and Margharita, solicited the pope to use the utmost rigour of the law, and save their family from more infamy.

This application against a father and a husband was revolting to his holiness; he dismissed the sons, rebuked the wife, and released the husband, fining him in a very large sum.

The warfare now was complete—and to the advantage of Francesco, since no further application to the pope could be hazarded; he exercised the tyranny which he could enforce, and gave vent to the continued execrations and curses to which his tongue was well accustomed, against his wife, Beatrice, and her young brother, Bernardo.

It was not long after this that Rocco Cenci was found murdered; the following year Cristoforo Cenci was assassinated by one Paolo Corso, of Massa; there remained now of the

whole family, Giacomo, who lived in retirement, having married a poor, but beautiful, girl of the Strada St. Lorenzo, in Paneperna; Margharita, Beatrice, and Bernardo.

The death of the two sons was not displeasing to Francesco, who refused to pay for even the candles which are placed around the coffin; and he declared publicly, that if his wife and his other children would all be kind enough to die, he would burn his own palace as an illumination of joy for such a happy deliverance.

Beatrice Cenci was now in her fourteenth year, and Nature had richly showered upon her all the beauty and the sheen of youth; she was of surpassing beauty, enchanting loveliness. Her education had been purposely neglected; but she had a natural and quick penetration, with a playfulness of manner—both of which she inherited from her mother; whilst she possessed all the courage and firmness of determination of her father. Her mind was stored with anecdotes of murders, atrocious deeds, and lawless violence—for such was the conversation of her father; and if she overheard others speak, these were the servants, the hired ruffians of her father, who

spoke of revenge as a virtue, and jested with crimes which would blanch the cheek of any but themselves. Beatrice was of an amiable and kind disposition, with laughing eyes and ready smile; but, like her father, on certain occasions, her black eyes sparkled with indignation, and her whole countenance lit up with animation.

Francesco Cenci was not ignorant of the beauty of his daughter, and by degrees he began to relax the severity he had practised towards her, which, at first, was attributed to affection. She was removed from the apartments inhabited by her step-mother and her young brother, and taken to another part of the palace; having a female attendant, with whom alone she was allowed to converse. In these rooms she was frequently visited by her father, who poured into the innocent child's ears revolting stories, thus familiarizing her with crime. The scandalous history of Bianca Cappello, of Eleonora of Toledo, the amorous adventures of Vittoria Accorabuona, and the tragic end of Vennina D'Ornano, and Isabella de Medici, killed by their husbands, formed the usual conversation.

Francesco could well move the feelings, and

excite enthusiasm, for no one could better paint scenes with which he was so intimate; there were, however, in all these interviews such glowing descriptions, such impassioned looks, such fiery eyes, that even Beatrice, young and innocent as she was, could not fail to perceive the drift and intention of her unworthy and unnatural parent; her silent scorn, her disgust, her rebuke, would send that parent away, cursing his fate in having a child so unworthy of himself. And, oh! unfortunate beauty, to whom could you turn for support in these trying moments; and when left to yourself, where did you direct your eyes in supplicating aid? Beatrice saw near her window the church of St. Maria dal Pianto, and worshipped in silence and in solitude the virgin whose name corresponded so well with her sorrowful destiny.

Lucrezia suspected, and soon became convinced, of the infamous project of her husband; her jealousy against Beatrice could not be disguised, although she respected the firmness and the resolution of her step-daughter, and felt certain she would never fall—but from force. There was still, perhaps, a mode of salvation; she remembered how Margherita had

acquired her husband, and she thought of a similar application to the pope; but this was soon relinquished, as she was informed his holiness was as much disgusted with the children as with the parent.

Amongst the friends of the brothers now dead was one Monsignore Guerra, who had been much struck with the beauty and elegance of Beatrice. He was a man made to captivate women—tall, remarkably handsome, well educated: he was destined for the church, and was about the person of the pope, but as yet he was not tied by any vows of celibacy, and could, on casting aside the mantle of religion, marry at his pleasure; in fact, Guerra was blindly enamoured of Beatrice, but had long considered his want of fortune an inseparable bar to the possession of her hand; but when Lucrezia proposed the union, Guerra at once consented to cast aside the church, and devote himself entirely to the success of his love. Urged by Lucrezia, he wrote a letter of declaration to Beatrice, couched in warm but becoming language, and at once offered his hand.

Lucrezia, when her husband had left the palace, evaded the vigilance of the servants,

and entered Beatrice's room; struck with astonishment at the elegance of the furniture, and the thousand little marks of attention and kindness which her husband had bestowed on so unnatural a rival, her dark, black eyes sparkled with indignation; then turning to Beatrice, she painted, in fearful colours, the jeopardy in which she stood, and hinted that, however unworthy, dishonourable, unnatural, was the passion of the father, she suspected her of somewhat favouring the incestuous advances. At first, Beatrice answered with the disdain of injured innocence; but she shortly burst into tears, and implored her step-mother to devise some plan by which she could escape from this horrid persecution. It was now that the step-mother relented, and told Beatrice that she had forestalled her desires, and had offered her hand; in fact, Guerra's letter confirmed the assertion, by offering his own. It was explained to Beatrice that the clerical dress of Guerra would baffle suspicion, if any existed; that he could be brought to the house as a confessor; and Lucrezia obtained from Beatrice an expression of her willingness to receive her lover whenever the interview could be arranged.

The two servants especially retained in the confidence of Francesco were Olimpio, who had saved his life by the information at Petrella; and Marzio, who had succeeded in getting into his service, and who pandered to Francesco's passion in order to secure his revenge. Both were eager to serve him, both feared him; he regarded them as his sicari, either to kill others—or to fall by his hands; neither of them were attached to their master, and a sign from him would have released him from their company.

Francesco was generous—Olimpio was avaricious. Francesco was generally kind in his manner—Marzio hourly approached nearer the heart of his victim. These two servants, faithful to their trust, each from personal motives, were those particularly entrusted with the guardianship of the Palazzo Cenci; but both were to be bribed, and Guerra was introduced by Olimpio, who could not refuse the proffered gold of the lover; he was always admitted when Francesco was absent; the father hated Guerra, because he had been once a favourite with his murdered children.

Beatrice, Lucrezia, and Guerra drew up a petition to the pope, in which they prayed his

holiness to release Beatrice from the control of her father, and give her in marriage to Guerra. This petition never was presented—for Guerra had to sound his way, to ascertain how far his relinquishing the church would be acceptable, and by the treachery of Marzio, who wished to displace Olimpio, Francesco was made aware of the whole plot. He did not dare to assassinate Guerra, who being near the person of the pope, was a man of great influence, and had, therefore, to separate the lovers without giving them the slightest suspicion that he was aware of all that passed; he never changed his manners to either his wife or Beatrice, but he prepared his revenge silently—nor was he long in carrying it out.

Francesco Cenci was now advancing in age, and had arrived at fifty-five, still strong, hale, and capable of fatigue; the wear and tear of his life of excitement and crime had not much blanched his hair, and he was still the man of energy, strength, and courage; he had grown more cautious with his years, and under the appearance of reformation, began to acquire a better name.

It was the summer, when Rome is prover-

bially hot and disagreeable; Francesco's servants had betrayed their trust, his wife and daughter were leagued against his authority; it was requisite to remove them from the presence of Signor Guerra, and still more requisite to separate from Olimpio. Francesco therefore resolved to remove to Petrella; and the following morning informed his family that before the sun set they would be on their road. Marzio alone was in the secret, but Olimpio, whose life hung upon a thread, suspected it; he instantly communicated with Monsignore Guerra, who, alarmed at the thought of the separation, with the perfect knowledge that it would be for ever, sent instantly for Giacomo Cenci, and calling Olimpio to aid with his council; they resolved to save their own lives, for they well knew that Francesco only retired from Rome to strike with more security, and less suspicion of his own person.

Olimpio was aware he could not escape, and soon convinced Guerra that his life was in equal jeopardy. It was therefore resolved, in order to save their own, to take the life of Francesco. All the necessary expenses were found by Guerra; it was agreed that Olimpio should instantly depart by the shortest road

to the Neapolitan boundary, and in the vicinity of Petrella, a place renowned of old for its bandits, associate himself with ten or twelve of these easily-hired assassins, and hiding themselves near the road which leads from Vittiana to Petrella, seize only Francesco Cenci, leaving the others free, and promising to release the prisoner upon the payment of a handsome ransom—or failing in this, to put him to death; the ladies were to return to Rome, and Giacomo Cenci was to endeavour to raise the money, which not succeeding in so doing by the short time allowed, his father would be murdered, and the family freed from suspicion.

The evening saw Lucrezia Petroni, Beatrice Cenci, Bernardo, and one maid-servant, in a carriage, escorted by Francesco Cenci and Marzio on horseback, through the Salara Gate, and on the road to Petrella.

Olimpio having received three thousand zecchini from Guerra to pay the assassins, left Rome an hour after Francesco had departed, and, by his speedy travelling, counted that he would gain a whole day on the carriage, and have ample time to organize his murderous crew.

Petrella is about fifty-five miles from Rome; the road runs by Castel Giubileo, Monte Rotondo, to Trasso. Here the Riete road is left, and turning to the eastward by Oliveto, the river Salto is crossed, and passing through Vittiana, the fortress of Petrella is reached; the latter part of the road is through a hilly and wooded country, inhabited by those who have long been famous for their deeds of desperate daring, their frequent robberies, and their relentless murders.

Fortune, that fickle goddess, favoured Francesco; in consequence of some atrocious murders lately committed in the neighbourhood of Riete, soldiers had been dispatched to scour the country of these vermin, who had crossed the frontier, and left the road clear.

Francesco, who calculated every chance, continued his voyage night and day, and safely arrived at Petrella. Olimpio was thus baulked of his prey; finding his friends in the Vittiana country dispersed, he crossed the frontier; but the time lost had enabled Francesco to arrive. Olimpio now offered two thousand zecchini for a certain number to remain in ambush near the castle, and to seize Francesco when, as was his usual custom, he rode out alone; but this

not being in accordance with their usual rapid action, and knowing the power of Francesco, the money was refused, and Olimpio returned to Rome, to report his failure to Guerra, who had, perhaps prudently, absented himself, and did not return until the middle of August that year, 1598, he having accompanied the pope to Ferrara.

Monsignore Guerra had gravely compromised himself; he had associated, nay, found the means by which assassins were to be hired to commit a murder; and Olimpio might now extort money from him at his discretion. He learnt the news of the failure of the plot on his return; still resolutely resolved to rescue Beatrice, he again entered into another design with Olimpio and Giacomo.

Olimpio felt confident that he was destined to fall by the hand of one of Francesco's sicari, and it was not difficult to excite the same apprehension in Guerra.

The sun had just set when the carriage and its escort arrived at Petrella. It had an awful gloom in the calm, cloudy evening; there was a dead, solemn silence all around, whilst the neglected castle seemed involved in the same

ruin, which weighed heavily on the hearts of its prisoners.

This castle, so celebrated for the murder about to be related, and for other crimes, now almost lost in the mist of time, stands upon a hill in the Neapolitan dominions of the Abruzzi, and on the confines of the Sabina Ponteficia, distant about fifteen miles to the westward of Aquila, and thirty from the Lake of Celano. Immediately around the castle are thick forests; to the north is the Colle di Vigliano; to the westward, near the frontier line, stood the Rocca di Vittiana, which takes its name from the country in which it stands, whilst, winding round the mountain, the stream of the Salto pursues its course; to the south is the Rocca Odorisi, and to the east is the forest of Luco, the perpetual and almost impenetrable refuge of the assassins and banditti of both states.

The castle of Petrella was irregular in its construction, and had been added to, according to the fancies or necessities of its masters. On its summit was a tower, called La Vedetta, for from this height the surrounding country was commanded; the walls were dull and heavy,

overgrown with weeds, and browned by time and neglect.

The interior presented no enticing habitation. It had three floors, and, with the rooms in the tower, might be even called five. The rooms were numerous, but the furniture was execrable. Time, neglect, and damp had done their worst, and the best apartment was but a splendid ruin of what once had been elegant. There was no air of comfort, no allurement of luxury; the exterior appeared a prison—the interior a solitude. The principal floor contained a long line of rooms which led to the tower, whilst below it was a garden in wildest disorder, overrun with weeds, and totally neglected.

Francesco Cenci, during the first days of his sojourn, did not change his manner in regard to his family. To his wife he was scornful—to his son, Bernardo, severe; and to Beatrice, kind; and the surveillance was so organized, that neither could hold any intercourse but in the presence of the father. Francesco himself never left the enclosure of the castle: he was well aware that the death of Riparella was not forgotten or forgiven; neither was he much at ease with regard to Guerra, who

might use the means Francesco had often employed to rid himself of an enemy. Besides this, there was Olimpio, who knew all his secrets, and might divulge them. This last one he resolved to remove into a better or a worse world: to accomplish this, he employed Marzio to contract for the murder for one thousand zecchini. Two sicari were sent to Rome, and paid a portion in advance to the above effect; but the visit of the pope to Ferrara had removed Guerra, and the plot proved abortive. Olimpio never ventured abroad, and the assassins who were charged with the double murder could not effect their purpose on either.

Francesco, believing himself secure from without, now resolved to carry out his incestuous project, for which he had removed to Petrella; he, however, perceiving that by kindness he made no advance, he turned to severity, and shut up his daughter Beatrice in one of the subterranean vaults of the castle, and consigned her to the vigilance of Marzio, who appeared most zealous in his service, and most devoted to his wishes. Nor was this all: he himself communicated to his child that her lover was dead—fallen by the hand of one of

her father's sicari, and that now no one lived who could save her from her fate. It is useless, nor, indeed, would it be either beneficial or amusing, to trace the continued advances of the father, or the resolute, virtuous, and dignified firmness of the daughter.

The diabolical cruelties to which Beatrice was subjected awoke the compassion of her gaoler, Marzio, who still only watched his moment for revenge, and thought that now the time was fast arriving when the shade of his once-loved Annetta should be appeased; and he resolved to heighten his revenge the more, by thwarting the purpose of the infamous Francesco.

Beatrice, not yet sixteen, languished in the worst of prisons. She believed her lover dead, and in the silence of the night, as the faint flickering of her light fell on the arched roof of her room, she imagined all horrors—saw in her half-bewildered fancy the ghost of her lover; sometimes, by a refinement of cruelty, the light was extinguished, and the moon's cold beams, which struggled through the weeds and bars, added a greater horror to her mind. Religion had been as carefully excluded from Beatrice as the fear of the Inquisition in the

father would admit; but the poor child had still the seeds which her angelic mother, Virginia, had implanted, and in these dreary hours of unmerited imprisonment, they became her only blessing and alleviation. Her sleep was short and feverish, her waking hours of the night devoted to prayer, and to the loud cry for assistance, as fear predominated over experience.

At last, the dead, heavy walls re-echoed a succession of shrieks—one was so sharp that it awoke her gaoler, Marzio; he leaped from his bed, and, moved by compassion, opened the prison door. Beatrice, alarmed, placed herself in a defensive attitude, for she had learnt to know that her father was not slow to insult, or to revenge; but Marzio had now matured his plan; he related the murder of the girl to whom he was affianced; he pointed out the certain perdition of Beatrice, and declared her cry for aid should not be in vain whilst he lived. He told her that Guerra still lived, that the projected murder had failed, and urged her, who was but too ready and willing, to write to Guerra; he provided the necessary articles, and told the trembling girl to write in all security, but that, if she heard

the sound of a pistol above, to hide the paper, extinguish the light, and feign to be asleep. He returned, to keep guard on the floor above.

The day had scarcely dawned when Francesco appeared. Marzio was engaged, apparently, in cleaning his pistols, one of which he turned to the window and discharged; but Beatrice had finished her letter; and on Francesco continuing his round, which was made often during the night, the writing articles were removed, Marzio had the letter, and not the least suspicion was excited.

The following night was destined for the fate of Beatrice. Her father, with a resolute step, descended to his daughter's prison, with all his horrible and iniquitous intention plainly written on his countenance; it was the best hour for Marzio's revenge; he carefully concealed his pistols, but grasped his stiletto; he placed himself at the door, he heard the angry words, the threatened vengeance; he gathered every word of the daughter's prayer for mercy, he heard her groans and her struggles, and throwing open the door, he rushed upon Francesco, and striking him a furious blow with his stiletto in the loins, said, "I give

you this death-wound, assassin of your own blood !"

Beatrice shrieked and fainted ; but her father turned like an enraged lion on Marzio, who seeing the blow, although dealt with all his force, had failed, hastily fled, and left the castle. Francesco now turned to his daughter, and, in the coarsest and most brutal words, accused her of being an accomplice in the deed—a parricide in heart and soul.

Unhurt, *untouched*, Francesco had good cause to commend his own prudence ; never did he walk or sleep but in a shirt of the finest and most supple steel ; nor was this the only time this shield had defended him ; and thus it was that those around him believed some unseen power of darkness defended him, and feared to encounter one conscientiously believed, in those superstitious times, to be sold to the devil, and protected by him.

Francesco left his daughter, with her prison door open, to pursue Marzio ; but the latter had cleared the castle, and, rushing into the thick wood, evaded all pursuit.

Beatrice, overcome with horror at the attempted assassination, and spurned by her

father, who cursed her as he pursued his enemy, became seriously ill. She fell upon the floor, and gave no signs of life but in a faint tremor of the limbs, and in a low, deep groan. Her father, on his return, found her in this state, and fearing she might die, and thus defraud him of his incestuous desire, had her removed to the first floor of the Tower, and where it was difficult for any of the family to hold the slightest communication with her ; and here, by slow degrees, her health became re-established, whilst the father, fearing to continue his advances, contented himself in becoming her gaoler, and himself carrying the only key to the apartment.

Marzio fled towards Rome ; but on his road met Olimpio, who had been dispatched by Guerra to watch the castle of Petrella, and endeavour to open a communication with the family ; the scene which had just passed was related, and Olimpio returned to Rome for further instructions ; the letter of Beatrice was delivered to Guerra, and Giacomo was again consulted. This strict pursuance of every act in this extraordinary tragedy is necessary, in order that the reader may understand the

thread of the discovery—the trial, torture, and executions which followed.

Another petition to the pope was suggested, but Guerra calling to mind the horror which his holiness had expressed against children who had rebelled against their parents, the intention was abandoned, and the last act of this extraordinary drama was arranged. One thousand zecchini were given to Marzio and Olimpio, who took upon themselves the responsibility; and the arraugements to assassinate Francesco Cenci, however powerfully protected by witchcraft, coats of mail, or devils; and Monsignore Guerra *gave his bond* for the payment of one thousand more when the murder was accomplished.

The tyranny of Francesco had now entirely estranged Lucrezia from her affections; she was a prisoner, condemned to waste her life for ever in the castle. In vain she suggested plans; she had no one with whom she could discuss them, but her step-son Bernardo, and he was too young to aid her in her devices, and she was surrounded by people who feared and who obeyed her husband; she often endeavoured to get outside the gates, on pretence of

change of scene in the forest, but she never succeeded.

On the 7th of September, 1598, Lucrezia, tired with the unvarying solitude of her room, sought a change of scene on the terrace of the castle. All was hushed and still, for in that solitude no cheerful voice disturbed the air, and no breeze rustled through the trees; her eye wandered round the gloomy forest, in which, frightful as it looked, and known as it was for the haunts of bandits, it was to her a paradise of freedom. She had walked and mused for some time, when her eyes were attracted by a white piece of linen, which seemed to move backwards and forwards, although not a breeze of wind disturbed a leaf; her fixed attention on the object was soon the cause of the cautious appearance of two men, whom Lucrezia recognized as Marzio and Olimpio. On signalizing her recognition, Marzio carefully concealed himself, whilst Olimpio crouched to the ground, and through the thick grass contrived to approach a window, which was almost entirely shaded by the branches and leaves of a tree. Lucrezia, knowing that some communication was about to be made, left the terrace, and ascertained that Francesco was in Bea-

trice's room, the windows of which looked in a contrary direction. The sun was fast setting; the shades of the forest facilitated the enterprize, and Lucrezia, freed from apprehension, approached the place to which Olimpio was advancing: he arrived close under the terrace; he informed her that assistance was at hand, and gave her, by means of a long reed which he had trailed along the ground, a letter and a small packet, containing a powder, which was to be administered to Francesco. Olimpio fixed the next day or night for the consummation of a crime which was to prevent a greater, and free every one.

Lucrezia objected not to the plan or the murder, but to the day, because it was the birthday of the blessed Virgin; and on such a festival, she objected to such an aggravation of sin. The 9th of September was therefore fixed — the hour arranged—all concerted—Olimpio retired, and Lucrezia, flushed with all the animation of hope, returned to her chamber.

On the 9th of September the dose was administered without trouble. Francesco never dreamt of treachery, where all were favourable to him; by two in the morning he slept, and soundly; for before carrying the plan into exe-

cution, and fearing his courage and his strength, various noises were made, which under other circumstances would have aroused him to suspicion. Lucrezia entered the room, and became the possessor of the keys which opened the doors of her step-son, Bernardo, and Beatrice. Bernardo followed instantly the injunction of Lucrezia, but Beatrice was so overcome, so stupified with drowsiness, that she gave no indication of surprise or gratification at the prospect of escape. She asked no question as to her liberation; but more like an idiot than a reasonable creature, followed Lucrezia to her room; here the wife of Francesco related the whole plot. Bernardo, struck with horror, refused all consent; but Lucrezia, in such glowing terms, depicted his certain incarceration for life—the tyranny practised—and the certainty of greater misery, that the boy, at last, consented even to assist, if necessary. Not so Beatrice: she was perfectly insensible, leaning against the wall; her eyes in fixed vacancy—her manner that of a person who had swallowed the drug which now left her father a prey to the sicari. Thus much was gained; one consented, the other did not refuse; the murderers were admitted, and led to Francesco's room.

It was strange, but no less true, that even whilst their object, stupified and in sleep, was before them, they feared to commit the crime, and returned pale and trembling to the room where Lucrezia, with palpitating heart, awaited the announcement of the deed, and where Bernardo and Beatrice were more like statues than living creatures.

"Santissima Vergine!" exclaimed Lucrezia.

Marzio coldly remarked, "that it appeared a cowardice to murder a sleeping man, and that pity and shame had withheld their arms."

Lucrezia, who had wound up her courage to the sticking-post, rebuked them for their cowardice and villany, and asked them if they would commit the act if he were awake? She accused them of cheating their employers, and promised them—*not* the remaining one thousand zecchini, but the certainty of assassination. She overcame their scruples, but awoke Beatrice from her stupor; and as the two sicari returned towards the bed-room, she attempted to follow. A word from Olimpio, in which the name of Guerra fell on her ears, arrested her steps, whilst Lucrezia fixed her threatening glance upon her, and held her as if in a vice, endeavouring to read her heart;

but Beatrice had relapsed, and her eyes betrayed only the vacancy of absent thought. Lucrezia placed her on a chair, and Beatrice fell forward on a table, her face supported by her hands.

In the mean time, the crime horrible in detail, but curious as shewing the coolness and the calculation of the assassins, was committed; they knew from experience that the coat of mail would ward off a blow at the heart, and they withdrew the greedy stiletto. Olimpio had brought with him a long nail, and Marzio had provided a hammer, perhaps to facilitate their entry into the castle or room. Olimpio now held the nail over the centre of the eye, and Marzio, with one fierce blow, drove it into the brain: before the struggling Francesco, electrified by the darting pain, could recover himself, another nail was driven through his throat.

The deed was done; Francesco, the murderer, the incestuous father, was struck in his sleep, with all his crimes upon his head, and, unshriven and unrepenting, hurried to his long account.

The nails were now withdrawn. The body, wrapped in a sheet *profusely stained with its blood*, was dragged along the corridor to the

great Tower, and there thrown over, lodging in an elder tree, into which Olimpio descended, and fixed two branches in the wounds; thus leaving it to the imagination, that Francesco, in his usual rounds, but intoxicated, had tumbled over the parapet, and met his death by being transfixed by the sharp branches.

"It is done!" said Olimpio. Lucrezia gave a bag of gold, the price of blood, and hurried them away, desiring them to penetrate further into the Neapolitan dominions, and not to return to Rome.

Marzio, who was a thief as well as a murderer, could not resist the temptation of a coat, embroidered with gold lace, which hung over a chair in Francesco's room. Lucrezia opposed this, on the ground that it might lead to discovery; but Marzio insisted, and going to Beatrice, who still remained unmoved in the same position, said, "I take this in remembrance of you;" and both the murderers fled.

The next morning, loud was the lamentation of the widow and the children, and more sincere was the bewailing of Francesco's hireling; not a suspicion was attached to the women. No one had seen either Olimpio or Marzio, and it was circulated and believed that Francesco

had, in his sleep, or in his drunkenness, fallen over the turret: none mourned him, but those he employed; none attempted the accusation of murder; it was enough he was dead in a tree, to the boughs of which he ought long since to have hung.

The widow still mourned, in all outward appearance. Francesco had a splendid funeral; the castle was untenanted; the family returned to Rome.

Giacomo Cenci now inherited the property, and took possession of the Palazzo Cenci, and Monsignor Guerra renewed his love. Beatrice's downcast look was attributed to filial grief. Francesco had died in the Neapolitan dominions; no one troubled himself in Rome about his death; every thing passed off smoothly; but Time, the avenger, had yet to do his work of discovery and justice.

Beatrice, after some weeks, recovered her health, and with it her usual capacity and beauty; for the dark dress of this fair-haired creature contributed to enhance her charms; her hand was engaged to Guerra, and the year of necessary mourning expired, she then would be married.

# CHAPTER XII.

## THE TRIAL OF THE CENCI.

How vain has been the effort of ages to bury in oblivion the story of the Cenci—equally vain have been the efforts of the popes to destroy the written history of that family.

The palace at Rome has fallen to decay and ruin, yet every traveller drives to see it, and every guide has a smattering of its history. The works written on the subject during the revolution of 1848 are all suppressed, the picture is no longer allowed to be copied; and yet, in all Rome, no picture is more sought after, or easier obtained — and no work is more coveted, but now more difficult to obtain.

Yet, in spite of all endeavours, the magic influence of the picture, and the atrocious cruelty of Clement, survive the tyranny which has for years been practised to obliterate the stain. The senate of Rome broke the statues and the images of Domitian, but the marble representative of the emperor has survived even a national curse, and is now in the museum at Naples. Great events and tyrannies cannot be smothered; the Palace of the Cenci still, in all its gloom, seems a monument fitted for the record of crime, and in the Palazzo Corsini is the written history of Beatrice's execution; the one is without doors or windows, the gloomy and deserted pile of massive architecture without any signs of human habitation, and tells, as forcibly as words can tell, the dismal tale of unforgotten crime. The MS. of the Cenci family is more fit for a book-worm than even a literary lady, and those who make no pretension to literature, may spare themselves the disgust and shame the MS. unfolds.

It is quite extraordinary the errors which have crept into almost every work written on this subject. Shelley and others make Guerra

the confessor of the family, although he never was in that position in the church, for he never was a priest, he was only preparing to be one; and it is clear that few have taken great pains to unravel the mystery, since few have given a detail of the trial and the tortures; and what is more marvellous, in the history of the portrait, almost every writer is in error.

When the news of the death of Francesco was known at Naples, an inquiry was instituted as to its cause; a commissary from the Royal Criminal Court of Naples was sent to Petrella, the corpse was disinterred, and a few persons in the immediate vicinity arrested and sent to Naples. Amongst these happened to be the washing-woman, to whom the sheet stained with blood had been given by Lucrezia; suspicion began to be more excited, but the other prisoners knew nothing of the murder, as was plain even to a Neapolitan judge; but in the evidence of the washerwoman, she declared she had received the sheet from Beatrice, and the blood was such as came from a fresh wound. The Cenci family being at Rome, and out of the jurisdiction of the Criminal Court at Naples, the evidence was forwarded to the Papal State.

The proof that Beatrice was not the person who gave the sheet is in the evidence itself; for when the washer-woman was desired to give the description of the person from whom she had received it, she described her as *fat*, and about thirty-five years of age.

The alarm of Guerra when he heard of the examinations at Petrella and Naples, and now transferred to Rome, may be imagined; he sent for Giacomo Cenci, and after a short consultation, two sicari were sent to assassinate Olimpio and Marzio. Olimpio was overtaken and murdered at Terni; Marzio had separated from him, and the sicari returned, having only performed the half of their duty; but Marzio, having himself committed another murder, fell into the hands of justice, and declaring himself tired of life, and wishing for death, confessed all his sins and iniquities, and with them the murder of Francesco Cenci, with every particular attached to it.

This confession was soon known at Rome; and, strange as it may appear, although the Cenci family could have escaped into Tuscany, or embarked at Civita Vecchia for a pilgrimage, they remained in their palace quietly awaiting their fate.

The Criminal Court at Rome, after a few days' delay, resolved to arrest the family; and on the return of the Cenci from their accustomed evening's walk, they were all taken. Giacomo and Bernardo Cenci were conducted to the Savella tower; Lucrezia and Beatrice were allowed to remain in the palace, well guarded. In the meantime Marzio was sent to Rome, and, on his confirming his former evidence, was committed to prison; Lucrezia and Beatrice being also removed, and kept in separate confinement in the Savella.

The preliminary proceedings of this extraordinary trial were confided to Ulisse Moscati, a man much esteemed for his uprightness and talent. Each prisoner was examined separately, the deposition of Marzio being read to them; they all denied the slightest knowledge of the affair; and when the embroidered mantle was shown Beatrice, with the affirmation of Marzio, that he had taken it "in remembrance of her" on the fatal night, she declared her total ignorance of all connected with it.

As Marzio's evidence was directly contradicted, he was ordered to be tortured; and some sense of feeling still remaining in this

once hardened ruffian, he withdrew his charge against Beatrice, declaring she was ignorant of all that had passed. This being a direct contradiction of what before he had asserted, he was subjected to every torture known in those terrible days, such as the rope, the horses, the weight of lead, the rack, the boot, and "*il gran trespolo*:" it was all useless, Marzio denied the *whole of his confession* at Naples, and left the case in uncertainty.

There is a saying, "That he who can bear the torture, will lie—and he who cannot lie, will suffer;"* and according to the law in force under the reign of Clement, the varying testimony of Marzio would be sufficient to authorize the torture to be administered to the accused: but Guerra had been active, and had spent a profusion of money in places where justice could be defrauded, and thus the torture was spared for a time, and each prisoner separately imprisoned in the Castel Sant Angiolo, whilst further inquiries were made. Here, in all probability, the case would have ended, but for the apprehension of the murderer who had been dispatched by Guerra and

* "Chè puo soffrire la tortura mentirà; e chi non puó mentire soffrirà."

Giacomo Cenci to assassinate Olimpio. This man was immediately sent to Rome, confessed his crime, and narrated some particulars which led to his employment.

Suspicions now began to be confirmed, and Guerra, who had little chance of protection from the pope, since his clerical career was abandoned when he resolved to marry Beatrice, thought it prudent to escape; but this was very difficult to perform, since Guerra was as well known as any man in Rome, more especially since his connection with the Cenci; but he had no time to lose, the sbirri had already the order for his arrest, and once taken, his life was certain to be sacrificed. Tall, fair, elegant, known to all in Rome, the admiration of many, the enemy of none, he found his best safety in buying the dress of a coal vendor and his business; he cut off his beard and his hair, and blacked his face, then boldly took to his trade, going about Rome selling his goods—taking care to walk as if he were lame, having his mouth generally crammed with bread and onions, making a countenance which formerly beamed with intelligence, the vacant and senseless image of a clown.

The sbirri were active in their researches,

and when he was not found in Rome, they searched the surrounding country; but they passed him often and often in Rome, and never suspected him. He now, having familiarized these men to his appearance, resolved to escape: to accomplish this, he purchased an ass and two panniers, and crying with his feigned voice his coals to sell, he passed the Piazza del Popolo, and took the road to Tuscany. His adventures were many, his escapes hair-breadth, but he was a consummate actor, and could throw the stupid stare of rustic innocence into eyes which formerly beamed with sagacity and intelligence.

Tuscany was no safe resting-place—he toiled on with his donkey to Genoa; here he changed his dress, embarked, and arrived at Marseilles, from which place his mother received the cheerful certainty of his safety, and to which place she remitted him money. In due time he heard of the fate of the Cenci; he knew he could never return to Rome, so he took service in the King of France's army, and becoming an officer of rank and merit, spent the rest of his days at that court.

The tomb of Hadrian was now the prison of Beatrice Cenci. It was called the Castel

of Sant Angiolo, from a chapel dedicated to St Michael, on the summit of which Benedict XIV. placed the bronze statue which remains to this day. One part, called "Il maschio," was divided into handsome rooms, the other and more retired part was destined as a prison for the nobility, and people well born, the evidence against whom was not sufficient to condemn them to the gloomy dungeons of the Savella.

From her prison windows Beatrice could see her own palace; and here, at scarcely the age of sixteen, this angelic creature in beauty and form, with a courage scarcely equalled, and never surpassed, and innocent of the crime, which almost would have been justifiable in her case, if any outrage of a parent could justify parricide,—she wearied out the days in prayer for divine assistance, and for the security of him she tenderly loved. She could not comprehend how she became suspected of the crime for which all her family were imprisoned; that she had been perfectly stunned and stupified by the rigour, and the attempts of her father, no one who reads the following pages, extracted from the notes of her trial, can doubt; but when she

recovered her senses and her memory, and was made acquainted with the death of her father, she could not disguise from herself the probability of her mother's guilt; but, confident in her own innocence, she little imagined that those the most guilty, to save themselves, had placed the whole burthen of the crime upon her, and felt assured that Justice, however hoodwinked, always protected the innocent.

The gaoler to whose care she was intrusted, fed her on hope, and nourished her with bright expectations; he had even told her that on the morrow she would be liberated; and when that morrow came, then came the blight of all hope—she was freed from the comforts of Sant Angiolo, and taken to the dark and dreary prison of the Savella, where already were assembled the criminal judges, with their notaries and sbirri. During her passage from Sant Angiolo to the Savella, Beatrice never spoke, and was in a state of stupefaction when the officer hastened her into her future abode, and only awoke to sensibility by hearing the sound of chains, and bolts, and bars, to render her escape impossible. She now turned to examine her prison; it was a large and lofty room, the light was admitted

by a small well-barred window, which looked into the court of the prison; the only attention which had been shown her, was in the modest cleanliness of her abode, and the transport of one or two pieces of furniture which she had used in Sant Angiolo.

The flight of Guerra, and the arrest of the murderer of Olimpio, were sufficient for the judge to order the application of the torture to the accused; and this barbarous system was supposed to insure a true confession, although the innocent could rarely escape, when the pains of the torture could extract from the person tortured any confession to evade the terrible pain to which he was subjected.

The preparatory torture, "monentibus indiciis," was applied to the suspected and accused, against whom there was not sufficient proof without the aid of their own confession. The torture "ad arbitrium" was extended according to the clause "ad omnia citrà mortem;" the torture was administered gradually; if the confession was extracted such as the judge deemed sufficient, the torture ended; if on the contrary, it was increased in intensity, until, as in the case of Marzio, the victim could bear no more.

The first two subjected to this extortion of evidence, were Giacomo and Bernardo Cenci. The rope was the torture, it consisted in the following:—A pulley was fastened to a hook in the ceiling of the room, one end of the rope forming a running noose, fastened the victim's hand behind his back; in this position the executioners, seizing the other end of the rope, which constituted the pulley, raised the poor devil from the floor, thus almost dislocating the shoulder joints: if this was unsuccessful, the jerk was administered; this consisted in raising the accused nearly to the ceiling, and then letting him fall to about a foot of the floor, the jerk occasioned by the sudden stoppage generally twisted the arms from the socket; if this failed, heavy weights of lead were fastened to the feet, and the same operation repeated—so at the last the most herculean frame was conquered by means of the increased weights to the feet.

It is marvellous how men could be found so little human, to carry out this cruelty on mere children; or how the human heart could become so hardened, so debased, so utterly unmoved, as to give the orders for such barbarities, and calmly superintend its execution.

In all these demoniacal punishments, as often practised on the innocent as the guilty, the wretched victim was made aware, previous to undergoing the torment, what the judge wished to extract from him ; and thus he knew his release from pains far worse than death, would cease when he either truly or falsely attested the evidence sought to be confirmed.

No sooner were the two brothers weighed from the ground and felt the acute suffering, than they implored to be lowered to confess ; but once upon the floor, the fear of certain death was stronger than the sense of pain, and they declared their innocence : they were again elevated, and the jerk was administered. This, owing to their light weight, only twisted the shoulders, without actual dislocation ; but the pain was so intense, that again they implored to be allowed to confess. They were rested on their feet, the executioners still ready to carry out the orders of the judge : again they declared their innocence ; but when the heavy weights were attached to their feet, and the cold stream of perspiration coursed over them, they did not dare to meet this further pain, which would have been followed by more and more diabolic inventions of tortures, and they confessed all

they knew and had seen: with the hope of saving their own lives, they attributed the murder and the murders entirely to Beatrice.

They were released, and sent back to their prison. Lucrezia saved the executioner the labour of torturing her. She was too fat to have resisted the first shock; and before her arms were tied behind her, she confessed all she knew.

It was now the turn of Beatrice; the young, the beautiful, the beloved. She never even betrayed the slightest cowardice — she never shrieked, but devoted the whole effort of her heroic heart to resist the temptation of saving herself, by a confession of guilt, when she felt her innocence; nor could the judge, the celebrated Moscati, elicit one word against herself, or in accusation of others.

Moscati desired the tortures to cease, for in Beatrice he recognized the firmness of innocence, not the obstinacy of guilt; and Marzio's retractation, as far as regarded Beatrice, seemed to the judge true. The proceedings, therefore, were ordered to be suspended, and Moscati drew up his report to the Pope Clement VIII.

Even common villains—their fortitude, their crimes, their tortures and confession—became

the public conversation of Rome ; it may then be faintly imagined how such tortures administered to the high of birth, the beautiful, the young, and the betrothed, were canvassed and publicly reproached. Clement heard from his thousand ears the public opinion, and he resolved to examine Moscati's report, holding the balance of justice with iron hand.

His holiness came to the conclusion that Moscati had not continued the torture with proper severity ; and such was the fame of Beatrice's beauty, that the pope imagined the judge had been soothed to mercy by the helpless, struggling child before him. As justice was to be done, and Moscati appeared too lenient, too humane and christian a judge, the case was taken from his jurisdiction, and given to one Cesare Luciani, an old and heartless man, who since the days of Sextus V. had enjoyed such a reputation as time and history have recorded of the modern Jeffries.

The only excuse for the barbarities which followed, is this : that Luciani, believing Moscati to have fallen under the pope's displeasure, from too much kindness of heart, was resolved that accusation should never be urged against

him. The portrait of this demon in the sacred robes of justice, is thus given by one who saw and knew him. His countenance was harsh and cruel in expression,—the man was almost shadowless thin; his eyes were deep set and threatening; his aquiline nose almost touched his chin, whilst the confines of his mouth appeared his ears. Dressed in the dark robes of the Roman criminal judge, this man presided at a raised table, in a large room, in which there were many tables, chairs, and stools; at the left of the judge, but at another table, sat the notary, Giacomo Ribaldello, a man so short of stature, that when he wrote, his nose seemed upon the paper. On the right of the judge sat a corpulent notary, who threw himself in an attitude of careless attention; on the table lay a large bronze crucifix; in the room were some sbirri and officers in attendance on the court.

Beatrice was introduced, and even Luciani could not withhold his admiration of her beauty; but he grew darker and darker as he perceived how Beatrice revolted at his countenance. She had come boldly into the presence, prepared in all respects to salute Mos-

cati, who had shown her much consideration; but in a moment her heart's blood froze at the sight of this inexorable and cruel man: still pale as death, there was a certain conviction of innocence, which was shown in her frank and noble countenance.

The trial commenced by reading the accusation made by Marzio, and the confirmation of this by the testimony and confession of Giacomo and Bernardo Cenci, with that of Lucrezia Petroni. There was a manifest contradiction in the different evidences; but Beatrice was arraigned as the principal cause of the murder, in her endeavour by such foul means to escape the incestuous desires of her father. She was sworn on the holy crucifix, and to the above charges answered: "Talk not such wickedness—I know nothing of these deeds and these circumstances, with the exception of the letter sent to my brother from the Rocca Petrella."

"And for the reasons contained in that letter, your brother was instigated to hatch the murder," replied the judge; and then continuing, he remarked, after Beatrice had begged her letter might be read, in order to clear her of the imputation of parricide; "we

have evidence enough to condemn you without further proof; but your own confession would save your soul."

Here, perhaps, it is not amiss to quote the words of the learned Jesuit, Martino Delrio, and words which gave a sanction to the cruelty under the garb of mercy.

"Torture is good; it gives the hope that the accused, overcome by pain, will confess his crime and save his soul; but not submitted to the torture, there is fear that he will die without confession, and in consequence, be eternally damned." To be tortured was, therefore, an especial ecclesiastical favour.

The judge now said, "Have you well reflected on your present situation? are you ready to make a full confession of the truth of those by whom you are accused?"

Beatrice raised her beautiful eyes to heaven, and said, with firmness, "I am innocent of this crime. I have said so before, and the judge who witnessed my torture was convinced of my innocence, and innocent I am."

"Your female arts and your witchcraft are useless against me, however much they have prevailed against my brother, Moscati: we have

no time for childish parlance—answer—will you confess your crime ?"

"I have no crime to confess," replied the pale and trembling Beatrice.

"Let her be taken to the Hall of Hercules," said the judge, "and submitted to the *Question.*"

She was led to this vast hall of torture ; it betrayed its use—everywhere instruments of the most cruel invention were seen—here vast pools of blood, there dark, disguised ruffians. The court followed the victim, and the judge assumed his seat in this vast and arched hall. Beatrice was placed in front of the judge, who again asked her in his harsh, discordant voice, if she would confess. Again she replied : "I have nothing to confess, but my ignorance of all laid to my charge, and my assertion of my innocence."

"Let the vigilia, in its utmost rigour, be applied ; you," he said to Ribaldella, "will see there is no relaxation for the first *five* hours. You, Sign. Notario, will relieve Ribaldella, and superintend the sentence for the next five hours ; if she is inclined to confess, call me." Then, as this arch-devil passed the pale and trembling girl, he said, with a sneer : "I have ordered

you a bed, in which you will have the sweetest dreams."

The torture of the vigilia was a splendid example of the invention of man against his fellow man; none but a devil could have devised it; none but a savage have used it. It consisted of a stool cut into the shape of a diamond, on the point of which the victim was seated, with as few clothes as such inquisitorial cruelty deemed necessary for decency. The legs were then doubled up and tied in that position, so as not to give the slightest support; the arms were tied behind, and a running knot fastened the wrists; this rope was attached to the ceiling, as described in the torture of the rope, but slack enough to allow the body to vibrate a little from side to side. When the jerk restored it to the equilibrium, or forced it over the other side; if the victim kept the balance, the executioners touched the shoulder, and produced the kind of pendulum motion. For ten hours was she doomed to this; often she fainted, was restored to life, replaced, and tortured; and although she was bathed in perspiration of pain, and the tears coursed down her lovely cheek, and groaned whilst writhing in this infernal torment, yet not one word

could be elicited. The ten hours expired, she was removed to her prison, there to remain for forty hours,—as the law in its leniency, forbade the continuance of the torture after ten hours of thevigilia, until that period was elapsed.

More dead than alive, she was laid upon her bed, and there left to recover, to undergo far worse pain and anguish; for Luciani, maddened to find such constancy and firmness, was resolved to exhaust every means which the cruelty of man had invented, rather than return to the pope no better torturer than his predecessor in the trial, Moscati.

The third day saw the poor victim again before her terrific judge, who merely said, "I await your confession—or I shall subject you to the pains of the 'Torturam Capillorum.'"

"I have nothing to confess," Beatrice replied; "and the Holy Virgin will assist me to bear even more than I have borne."

Luciani made the fatal signal, the pitiless executioner seized the helpless creature, and dragged her under a rope to the fatal pulley; her beautiful long hair was twisted like a cable and fastened to the pulley. Asked again to confess, and refusing, she was raised to the ceiling by the hair of her head, and lowered again to

have the question repeated, and the same answer given.

With horrid eyes, flashing with vengeance, Luciani saw the brave and innocent girl defy his tortures; his infernal soul panting for greater cruelty, with a shrill voice he added to the "*torturam capillorum*" the greater one of the "*ligaturæ*." This consisted of a number of small strings bound with all possible tightness round the hand and wrists, so as to dislocate the hand, and not unfrequently to cut it off from the wrist bone; the strings were tightened in proportion to the resistance of the victim, and Luciani's eyes glistened as he heard Beatrice shriek with torment; but nothing could be elicited, but "Holy Virgin, assist me!" She was raised by the hair, and then suddenly let fall to about a foot of the ground, tearing away the hairs which did not bear an equal weight from the skin of the head; but all was useless, and Luciani thought his victim would even escape him and his inventions. "Stop!" he cried, "take off her stockings, and apply the taxillo." This was placing sharp pointed wood inserted under the nail of the foot, and then setting it on fire; it failed, Beatrice still declared her innocence.

Luciani had another resource, which succeeded better; he left the room and returned with Giacomo and Bernardo Cenci, and the step-mother; the horror of the scene excited the brothers,who knew themselves the cowardly wretches who, to save themselves had fixed the entire blame on Beatrice; they saw the superhuman efforts of their sister, her eyes almost starting from their sockets,—the face blanched to a death colour,—the whole frame writhing in torments; and, unable to witness this longer, they threw themselves on their knees, and emplored her to confess, as by so doing all their lives would be saved. They turned to the devil in disguise of a man, and prayed him to relax a moment; he saw the fortitude failing, not from the torture, but from the imploring tones of the brothers.

Luciani pressed the executioners to greater exertion, when Beatrice exclaimed: "Save me from this, and I will confess." Luciani's eyes sparkled with joy—he had found a torture, and affection sufficiently strong to yield to his wish. Beatrice recovered her firmness, and Luciani, dreading less she should refuse, called upon the executioner to begin, and to be unsparing in the greater torture. It was

too much, human nature could no longer bear that which had killed many men, and in the assurance that her confession would save the lives of her brothers, she turned to them and said: "You desire this sacrifice—be it so. I fear it is a rash effort, but I will give my life to save yours." She answered, "It is true," to every question put by the judge, although those questions were directly at variance with the truth.

It was done, the affection for her brothers had done more than tortures, which would have extracted sighs, and groans, and tears, from the most resolute; and as a kind of reward, the triumphant judge allowed the family to remain together; but the next day, Giacomo and Bernardo Cenci were removed to the prison of the Tor di Nona, and Lucrezia and Beatrice were consigned to the Savella.

Luciana was quick with his report to the pope; all was complete,—the confession of Beatrice was the final act which stamped with truth the whole dreadful affair.

Clement VIII., a man renowned for his mercy, was of a temper which he could seldom control; he was convinced of the whole truth, because these very children had sought their

father's death, when he was imprisoned, and had solicited the pope to that effect. Clement was inhumane, and subject to violent bursts of temper. On the report of Luciani, he turned round to the judge, and, in the fury of excitement, said: "Let them all be tied to the tails of wild horses, and thus dragged to their deaths." Even Luciani startled, but he dared not to speak; he retired hastily, and sought the Cardinal Sforza, who, with the other cardinals, instantly went to the pope, and urged the necessity of the criminals being allowed a defence.

Clement, God's vicegerent upon earth, resembled but little the patient meekness of him whose disciple he pretended to be, reiterated the order.

"Hold!" said Sforza, "and let your holiness consider what all Christians will say when they hear that the pope condemned a whole family to a barbarous execution, in a moment of rage and excitement, and without allowing one word to be said, either in extenuation or defence."

"And did they give their father time for extenuation or defence?" said this *Christian* pope.

Sforza replied, "the crimes and errors of the

Cenci were no reasons for the injustice of his holiness."

Clement suddenly returned to himself, thanked Sforza for having saved him so heinous a crime, and allowed twenty-five days for the preparation of the defence.

The first lawyers of Rome were engaged in this celebrated cause; and at that time no greater advocates existed than Niccoli de Angelio, Altieri, and Prospero Farinacci.

On the 4th of September, Clement VIII. dressed in white silk, over which descended to the knees a kind of surplice from the shoulders, of red velvet, trimmed with ermine. His cap was likewise of red velvet, with ermine. By his side were four cardinals; on his right was the Cardinal S. Marcello, his secretary, and on the left the Cardinal Baronio, who so nearly succeeded to the popedom after the death of Clement VIII. His holiness sat upon his throne, to the right of which was a table, with a green covering, around which were seated the judges of the criminal court, and opposite to this table was another, at which the procuratore fiscale, with several notaries, all dressed in white silk, were seated. In front of the throne was the table of those

destined to defend the prisoners, whilst at the different doors stood the pope's guard, in their harlequin dresses.

The greatest hope was in the pope's clemency; for, as all had confessed, the defence could only consist of extenuating circumstances. The advocates being admitted, they prostrated themselves at the pope's feet, and then took their seats. The fiscale read the accusation; he cited the confession; he saw no extenuating circumstances for Beatrice, who, if threatened as had been averred, should have sought safety by flight, when the father slept. And of this all could have availed themselves, without having recourse to the murder; he therefore prayed for judgment, with all the pains and penalties attached to the crime of parricide.

Clement VIII. was now sixty-six years of age, and when irritated, his face assumed an appearance which intimidated the boldest in Rome; and as the fiscale read the recital of this almost unprecedented crime, with all its coldness and calculation, the pope's countenance announced the thunderstorm of his mind.

When Niccolo de Angelio, the counsel who pleaded for Giacome Cenci, began, the pope

interrupted him by saying: "Then in Rome we have people who murder their fathers, and yet have lawyers to defend the parricide." De Angelio was timid by nature, and stopped; but Farinacci said, with a firm voice: "Not so, most holy father; we are not here to defend the crime, nor are we come to defend a parricide; but we are come to prove that some of the accused are innocent, and worthy of your commiseration.".

The pope fixed his eagle eye on Farinacci, and desired him to speak first. The plan of the defence adopted—for every word spoken in Latin, as was then the mode, beginning with "Absit Deus Santissimo Padre," to the last word, is still retained—was this: to admit the murder, throwing it entirely upon Beatrice, to relieve her step-mother and her brothers, she being, in her own defence, obliged either to commit incest, or the crime of murder; thus, if she were thought justifiable, or the extenuation considered sufficient, and her life should be spared, then the others escaped, as Beatrice was the great offender.

Farinacci quoted fourteen cases* in which a parent may kill his children, and yet not suffer

* Text est in Leg. Divus Adrianus, ff. de Parricid.

the extreme sentence of the law. He brought to his aid the opinions of Bartalo, Angelo, Carrara, Pietra da Planca, Corrado, Menorchio, and other learned authorities, who were unanimous in their opinion, that under any of the fourteen cases the punishment of death ought not to be inflicted, but any other discretionary punishment; and hence, by a legal inversion, it was argued that Beatrice had a certain good cause for extenuation, as one of the principal offences enumerated in the fourteen, was, when a son abused his step-mother; and the father's abuse of his own child was a nearer and a deadlier sin. Farinacci spoke boldly and undismayed, and concluded by urging the pope to clemency.

The court broke up, the pope convinced that no mercy ought to be shewn, and yet much moved by the pleadings of the counsel; and calling his secretary, he devoted the whole night to the calm study of the case. On the following morning, he gave orders for the accused to be removed to the secret prisons; this gave great hope, as it was a kind of preliminary announcement that his holiness's mind was not made up on the subject.

In Rome, popular feeling was much in

favour of the pope's clemency; the torture and the sufferings undergone by Beatrice; the knowledge that the confession was far from a voluntary one, and given only in the hope of saving her brothers' lives, even if she sacrificed her own: whilst the common observation of the poorest of intellect was, that a person so closely confined as Beatrice was, could not have admitted the murderers; neither could she have planned the deed. The numerous contradictions in the evidence; her age; the age of Bernardo, not yet sixteen, with the known character of the father, were unhesitatingly referred to.

Five days had elapsed, and the pope's sentence was not promulgated; but on Friday, 10th September, 1599, Farinacci was admitted into the secret prisons of the Torre Savella; he was accompanied by a young man then twenty-five years of age, wearing the legal dress, which closely resembled that of the church. Beatrice was in bed when her counsel was announced. She hastily threw over her shoulders a white mantilla, and as her hair was in disorder, she carelessly wound round it, in a turban manner, a white cloth which was at hand: with all the animation of hope, she asked

Farinacci if he had brought the glad tidings of her pardon; but Farinacci, who had so bravely defied the pope, could not consent to palter with the truth; he had had great hopes from the interest made by many noble families in behalf of the Cenci; but most unfortunately, at this moment, the population of Rome were excited by the fact, that another parricide had been committed by a near relation of the Cenci, in the person of the Marchesa Santa Croce, who was murdered by her son, Paolo Santa Croce. Farinacci felt this unfortunate occurrence would steel the pope's heart, and he therefore told the truth, by saying, the sentence was as yet unknown.

Whilst Farinacci engaged Beatrice in conversation, this poor victim hardly noticed the young man; but turning suddenly, she found him busily employed in drawing her portrait; she was stopped in the rebuke she intended by Farinacci, who presented to her the celebrated Guido Reni. The work was half finished, so rapidly did this great master work: for it is well known that his celebrated picture of the head of Hercules was done in two hours.

In the Beatrice, a picture for ever admired and sought, there is the exquisite beauty re-

tained, although all that detracts from mildness and sweetness, such as grief, sorrow, and terror, are there.

"In the whole mien there is," says Shelley, "simplicity and dignity, which, united with her exquisite loveliness and deep sorrow, are inexpressibly pathetic. The moulding of her face is exquisitely delicate; the eyebrows are distinct and arched; the lips of that permanent meaning of imagination and sensibility, which suffering has not repressed, and which it seems as if death scarcely could extinguish." There is a fixed and pale composure on the features; she seems sad and stricken down in spirits, yet the despair thus expressed is lightened by the patience of gentleness. Her head is bound with folds of white drapery, from which the yellow strings of her golden hair escape and fall about her neck."

Monsignore Maffeo Barberini, then thirty-two years of age—afterwards, at fifty, pope, under the title of Urban VIII.—was the great protector of Guido, and also the friend of Guerra, of whose love for Beatrice he was well aware, became the most strenuous advocate in favour of the latter, and the first question asked, as Barberini entered the studio where Guido and

Ubaldini, and others of high celebrity, worked, was as to the fate of Beatrice.

The pope, on hearing of the Santa Croce parricide, and the escape of the murderer, remembering alsc the fratricide of the Massimi yet unpunished, and feeling his reign disgraced by these frequent horrors, resolved upon the execution of all concerned in the Cenci parricide.

In the mean time, Guido continued his work; Beatrice remarking, "that much as she esteemed the merit of the artist, she feared his celebrity would render her name more odious to posterity. Perhaps," she said, "my countenance will assure you I am not guilty. My defender, no doubt, has told you all, as I have honestly unburthened my thoughts to him; and though I shall leave this prison only for my execution, and all Rome will see the descendant of Giovanni X. suffer an ignominious death, yet will I remain quiet now—praying you to add in the corner of the portrait, which must become celebrated as your work, and be remembered as my sufferings, the word '*Innocente.*'"

On the 10th of September, the pope held an audience with the judges of the criminal court,

and the sentence of death was recorded. Ferrante Taverna, the governor of Rome, was sent for, and the pope himself said—" We leave the affair of the Cenci in your hands; you will see justice executed without the slightest departure from the utmost limit of the law."

The scntence was soon known in Rome, and Barbarini and Sforza were unremitting in their exertions, at any rate, to save the public execution; they argued with the pope, that justice might be done as well in the private prison as on the fatal scaffold usually erected in the Piazza de Ponte S. Angelo; that the Cenci were of high and noble family, and that the papal chair had been filled by more than one of that name; that the disgrace of a public execution more or less reflected on the whole nobility. Clement heard all the reasonings unmoved; he was resolved to make a public example, and one which should be remembered through ages yet to come; he was inflexible—immoveable.

Prospero Farinacci heard of the failure of the Barbarini and the Sforza; he was resolved to try his powers. On the morning of the 11th of September, the pope, unable to sleep after his having signed the dreadful sentence, had

risen early. Farinacci, without awaiting the customary etiquette, himself opened the door of the pope's chamber, and threw himself at his feet; the guards rushed to remove him, but Clement waved to them to leave the room.

"Hear me, most holy father," he began, "for I crave mercy, and mercy is your attribute." He then, in most glowing terms, enumerated every circumstance of the case; he dwelt upon the heroic courage of Beatrice; her innocence; her sacrifice for her brother, and the line of defence adopted in order to save all the family; he again instanced the impossibility of the guilt of Beatrice, since she was with her father, when Olimpio and Marzio gained sufficient access to Petrella to arrange the plan with Lucrezia; he spoke of the more than sacrifice in people so young as Beatrice and Bernardo, and in the whirl of his tremendous eloquence —his bold and powerful words—his true and manly feeling—his quick eye detected the wavering of the determination of the pope.

Had Barbarini been as eloquent as Farinacci, mercy for all would not have been solicited in vain; but Farinacci was an advocate. It was a powerful pleading to withhold judgment; it was a paid effort to withhold the

sword of justice; still it had its effects. The pope, much moved, replied, "The sacrifice of your heroine shall not be without effect; the sentence of death is remitted as far as concerns Bernardo Cenci." It was, when the pope expressed himself in these words, *four* o'clock in the morning.

In the Savella and the Tor di Nona, a different scene passed. It was six o'clock before the sentence was communicated. Beatrice had slept well, and was awakened by the gaoler, and conducted into a large room; here she found Lucrezia Petroni: the awful words were pronounced—they were to die. Beatrice exclaimed, "How is it possible to die so suddenly!" Lucrezia said, "How we have all been deceived; may God receive the innocent!" and throwing herself at Beatrice's feet, burst into a flood of tears.

Beatrice well understood the meaning of her words and actions, and raising her stepmother, kissed her with all affection; and kneeling down, they both prayed earnestly, devoting themselves to the justice of God, for that of man was passed. "Let us now do our duty," said Beatrice, "let us do the last act of earthly occupation; let notaries be sent for, and our

wills made." This was done with all the coolness and courage of people in sound health, and little fearing the sword of the executioner. Beatrice desired she might be buried in St. Pietro Montorio; she left forty-five thousand scudi to the religious company of St. Francesco, to endow with some trifle fifty poor children, on the anniversary of her death; and the picture of the Vergine Addolorata, which always hung at the head of her bed, and to which she had prayed with true fervency, she bequeathed to Guerra.

At eight o'clock the wretched creatures were confessed, and attended mass; Beatrice remarking, "that their rich dresses, such as all noble Roman women wore, were unfit for them now;" and changed hers for the dark and more solemn colour of those devoted to religion. Extreme unction was administered, and all the preparations for execution made. It was whilst the mother and the daughter mutually dressed each other in these sable garments, that the cry of the people outside announced that Bernardo's sentence was remitted. Beatrice's beautiful countenance lit up with animation and joy, as she exclaimed, "Oh, Holy Virgin!

I thank you that my prayer is heard, and that my death has saved the life of my brother."

The brothers of the Misericordia of St. Giovanni Decollato, the principle of the order of which is founded on the basis of universal benevolence, attended, as is their custom, to console and to pour the pure stream of religion into the hearts of the condemned. This order was one of the earliest institutions of priestly charity, and had its origin under the popedom of Niccolo V., having been founded by some Florentines established at Rome; although in reality the first founders were in Florence, and the order established there when the plague mentioned by Boccacio occurred. "During its continuance a few individuals, firm in purpose and strong in piety, self-devoted, attended on the sick and dying; and the survivors of this chosen few, afterwards taking the monastic habits and order of brothers of the Misericordia, assumed for life the performance of those services, which in the hour of anguish and sorrow they had voluntarily fulfilled."*

The plague occurred also in Rome, and the brothers of the Misericordia after its cessation

* Bell, vol. ii. p 72.

built the church of St. Giovanni Decollato, in the Strada Giulia, taking upon themselves the obligation to comfort with spiritual prayer and exhortations the guilty condemned to death, and after execution to give them sepulchre in the cemetery adjoining their church. Innocent VIII., for the convenience of these holy men, amongst whom princes, cardinals, and even popes, have been numbered among their penitents, and have joined in their vows and services, ordered that no execution should for the future take place on Monte Caprino (the ancient Campidolean Rock), but on the Piazza St. Angelo.

The governor of Rome gave orders that the procession was to go through nearly half Rome, having taken every precaution against a rescue which he knew had been planned by several of the associates of Guido; for had the procession marched its shortest way, five minutes would have been sufficient to have reached the scaffold. In order to give greater effect to the punishment, the cortege, in leaving the Strada Tor di Nona, took the way to the Strada del Orso.

At the hour of thirteen, Roman time, the Misericordia took their crucifix, covered with

black, to the prison of the Tor di Nona, in which Giacomo and Bernardo were confined: Giacomo came first, he prostrated himself before the crucifix, recited a prayer, and kissed the dead Christ; Bernardo followed, his eyes bandaged, his hands bound. The fiscal, in a loud voice, said—"Signor Bernardo Cenci, his holiness has spared your life; but you will accompany your relations to their execution, and pray God to have mercy on their souls:" his hands and eyes were then unbound.

The executioner desired Giacomo to mount the cart and to undress himself, so as to be tortured by red hot pincers during the route. This was done upon a fresh part of the body every ten minutes; but the pope, notwithstanding his order to the governor, had remitted at the last moment this cruel and barbarous part of the sentence upon parricides.

The recitation of the litany commenced, and the procession set forth, having the brothers of the Misericordia with their black standard at its head, and escorted by all the sbirri of Rome, who surrounded the criminal cart, on which was the executioner, Giacomo Cenci, with his confessors, and Bernardo, who hid his face in his mantle; there also was the

gold embroidered mantle of Francesco Cenci, which Marzio had taken the night of the murder. The procession wound its dreary way towards the Strada del Orso, crossed the place of Nicosia, to that of Navona; here it turned to the south by the Piazza delle Pallottole, and making a rather circuitous route, arrived at the palace of the Cenci, where it halted. When Giacomo Cenci heard his sentence, he asked to be allowed to see his children; but as the time fixed for the execution admitted of no delay, the request was refused, but was now granted.

On reaching his palace, his, even to this moment, he exclaimed, with heart-rending shrieks, "My children! my children!" The mob, infuriated and excited, shouted—"Dogs of the devil, give him his children!" and the threats were accompanied by a shower of stones, one of which struck the executioner on the shoulder. The two confessors ordered the procession to stop, and the crowd were only appeased when Giacomo descended from the cart into the court-yard of his palace, where his wife and children shortly appeared. The wife, on seeing Giacomo, fainted on the last stair step; then rushed the children, the

elder of which was only four years of age, and wound themselves round the legs of their hand-cuffed parent; loud and dismal was the moan of the poor mother, who seemed supernaturally to have hurried herself back to sensibility, whilst the cries of the poor infants awed the spectators into an awful and impressive silence.

Giacomo recovered himself after the first shock; he was warned his time was short. Looking hard at his brother, he said, "Children, that is your future father;" the mother fell again into a swoon, and Giacomo, casting a wild and impassioned look, availed himself of her insensibility to meet greater anguish, mounted the cart, and as he turned again, and with his eyes riveted on his wife, his lips murmured "Andiamo."

The most humane were those who hurried the departure. The procession proceeded towards St. Bartolomeo de Vaccinari, and entering the Strada Giulia, stopped at the prison-door of the Savella.

Here a great crowd had collected, animated by that curiosity so common to all, of wishing to see one so young and beautiful, and to bear witness to that firmness and courage which

had surprised a Moscati, and defied a Luciani. The crucifix was placed at the entrance to the prison, and the two victims knelt at its feet, and with their two comforters, for so the brethren of the Misericordia were called when they attended on those condemned to execution, prayed earnestly and devoutly; they then, with firm steps, followed the cart on foot.

The first, immediately behind the fatal charette, was Lucrezia; as she was a widow, she was dressed in a black cotton dress, without any ornaments in the front, and with long sleeves —she wore black velvet slippers without heels, such being the fashion of those days. She was small of stature, and stout, forty years of age; but time, and even anguish, fear, and apprehension, had not advanced the appearance of age. The lineaments of the face were fine, approaching to beautiful; the nose small, eyes black, and her skin snow-white; her hair was chestnut colour, and was not profuse.

Close behind her walked Beatrice Cenci, who had just passed her sixteenth birthday; she was not tall, but slim and elegant. The face was more angelic than human, the mouth small, whilst the auburn hair, which curled

naturally, floated over her eyes, and hung over her shoulders. She wore a robe of blue tissue, cut in the shape of that worn by her stepmother; a blue silk veil was fastened to her head, and fell over her shoulders; the under dress was violet silk, her slippers being of white velvet, fastened with crimson-coloured strings. Both stepmother and Beatrice had their hands free, but the arms were tied in such a manner that each could carry a crucifix, and hold it opposite the face; in this attitude of the arms, the tight sleeves worn underneath the dress and fastened at the wrist, the usual custom of the time, were seen. As the mournful cortege proceeded, one or two ineffectual attempts at confusion and rescue were essayed without effect; the sbirri were numerous, and every precaution had been taken by the governor.

Lucrezia Petroni was in tears as she walked; but Beatrice exhibited her usual courage and calmness, which surprized and interested all who beheld. As they passed the church of St. Maria del Suffragio, in the Strada Giulia, she knelt down and said aloud, "Adoramus te, Christe;" the whole assembly

prostrated themselves, and the silence was the silence of prayer.

Passing the Strada Paolina, the procession arrived at the place of execution, in the Piazze de Ponte St. Angiolo. Four streets led to this place, all of which were crowded to excess; there was a death-like silence as the procession came in sight of the raised scaffold, where stood out, plain to all, the fatal block, the empty bench, and the executioner's axe: by the side of the block were four coffins; the place around the scaffold was kept clear by a strong division of the sbirri.

Near the scaffold was erected a temporary chapel, the last resting-place before execution: here the last offices of the church were administered; here the sacred elements were displayed for the adoration of those so shortly to be silent for ever; here was the last act of the priest—the confessor and the comforter. And if Beatrice had betrayed one moment's weakness, it was when she saw the scaffold and the chapel; she seized the hand of her comforter, who rallied her by words which those accustomed to such acts and sights alone can have the coolness to pronounce.

"Courage," said the comforter; "God

alone knows the secrets of your heart; he has supported you, because you are innocent, until now, and he will not forsake you in the last moment; he accepts your sacrifice as an expiation of your sins, and has prepared for you the reward of innocent and suffering martyrs." Thus exhorted, Beatrice recovered her wonted firmness, and arrived at the temporary chapel at the foot of the scaffold.

The first placed on the scaffold was Bernardo, who, although respited, was doomed, by the pope's order, to witness the execution. He no sooner reached the platform than he fainted; he was restored to consciousness, and seated opposite the fatal axe.

Preceded by the standard of the Brothers of the Misericordia, the executioner advanced to the chapel and laid his hands on Lucrezia, who was led to the scaffold, her head enveloped in a black veil. She was desired to walk barefooted, and with difficulty she mounted the steps, before which she kissed the crucifix; the veil was taken from her face, and she beheld the axe and the executioner. She raised her eyes, and said, with a loud voice, "Oh, my God! and you, my sacred

brethren, pray for my soul; but *she* is innocent."

She turned to Alexander, the head executioner, as if to ask what she was to do; and he desired her to sit across the block. Even then, fearing some indelicacy, she hesitated; but the executioner roughly placed her on the block, and severed her head in an instant; it was wrapped up in the black veil, and the body thrown into one of the coffins.

The indecency of the violence of the executioner aroused the indignation of the populace; hisses and groans were the prelude to a shower of stones, whilst one person, dressed in the habit of the Misericordia, stood on the steps of the chapel and waved a white pocket-handkerchief. Instantly about forty men made a rush towards the scaffold; but the sbirri, seeing the signal, forced the brother into the chapel, and shut the door. This last act of devotedness to Beatrice failed, and Ubaldino Ubaldini, seeing the sbirri reinforced by troops from St. Angiolo, retired from the scene.

The tumult over, the fatal standard was again at the chapel, and Beatrice wrapped in prayer, felt the heavy hand of the executioner on her shoulder. She started upon her feet,

and looking him full in the face, said, "My mother?"

"She is dead," was the only reply. "Come."

Beatrice reverently kissed the crucifix, and said, "Thou callest me, O Lord! and I willingly obey thy summons, thus to deserve your forgiveness;" then kissing her brother Giacomo, she said, "Weep not for me; we shall be happy in heaven, for I have forgiven you." Giacomo fainted; and Beatrice, turning to the executioner, said, "I am ready."

The executioner now bound her with a cord, when she turned to him with a smile, and said, "You may bind my body, but make haste and free this soul, which will rise to immortality and eternal glory."

Scarcely had the fatal herald—the standard—appeared from the chapel than all discord ceased, and the silence of the dead occurred—not a sound was heard—not a voice rose even in prayer—the eyes, the senses, were stunned by the appearance of Beatrice; she advanced to the foot of the scaffold, kissed again the crucifix, received the blessing of the holy brother, and leaving her slippers, mounted, with active, firm step, the fatal scaffold. On

the approach of the executioner to remove the veil, she looked at him with a certain scorn, as if he doubted her courage; she removed it herself, and carelessly threw it on the bench; then placing herself in the required position, she, with a firm voice, invoking the names of Jesus and Mary, awaited the stroke. The executioner, himself overcome, seemed unable to raise the axe, and some moments elapsed before that beautiful head was severed from the convulsed body. Her brother, Bernardo, as the stroke fell, shrieked with a shrill scream, and fell upon the floor; nor could they recall him to his senses until after his brother, Giacomo, had met his fate—and his was a terrible and an awful fate. The head of Beatrice was wrapped in the veil and placed by the side of her step-mother's; the body, as in the former case, was consigned to its coffin.

The last act of this dreadful tragedy was now to be performed. Giacomo appeared on the scaffold nearly naked, and turning to the crowd, he said, in a firm voice, "Since in my examination I inculpated my brother and my sister, I inculpated them falsely; and I have acknowledged this in an act sent to Cardinal

Alexander, in order that he might inform our holy father, the pope. I now go to render my account to God. I declare I also am innocent; pray for me—pray for me."

The executioner's task began; the pale Giacomo was thrown on his knees, his eyes were bound; but here I cease the recapitulation of his tortures, and the unearthly agony he suffered; let it suffice to say he was tortured, and quartered, and his throat cut, in the presence of this multitude, and within a foot of his brother, who was covered with his blood!!

The populace, stunned by the atrocity of the execution, quickly dispersed; and by two o'clock of the afternoon all was over: but many died of the heat and the excitement of that day; amongst whom was the man who had endeavoured to save her—Ubaldini; "and thus," says the historian of Beatrice, "her shade appeared before her God, accompanied by many others."

At the foot of the statue of St. Paul, which stands to this day on the Ponte S. Angiolo, three coffins were laid, with four lighted torches to each. On Beatrice's head was placed a crown of flowers; she seemed to sleep,

so calm was the repose of death; to this bier many, many came and prayed, and sprinkled her virgin body with flowers and with holy water. The bodies remained exposed until four o'clock, when the holy brothers of the Misericordia, reciting the "Miserere," conveyed the dead to their church, where they again remained exposed, until the last act of sepulture closed the scene for ever.

The conveyance of the dead to the churches, in the time of Clement VIII., occurred at different hours. The poorer classes were removed at the setting of the sun; the nobility, the priests, and officers of the law, had their ceremony at one o'clock of the night; whilst cardinals, princes, and barons of the Roman Empire, were conveyed to their graves at two of the night. The Cenci family belonged to this last class; Giacomo was carried to the church of S. Tomaso, in which was the family vault; Lucrezia to S. Georgio, as she had desired; but there was a greater respect for Beatrice, whom all believed an innocent martyr. The orphans and the brotherhood of the Franciscans preceded the bier of Beatrice, and round the coffin were carried fifty white torches. In the coffin, in the same dress in which she

was executed, and covered with flowers, placed as to hinder the appearance of decollation, so placid did she look in death, this virgin martyr appeared to sleep. She was carried to the church of S. Pietro Montorio; and here, after the usual prayers for the defunct, was buried at the foot of the chief altar, under the famous picture of the Transfiguration, of Raphael, now in the Vatican, the corpse of the celebrated Beatrice Cenci.

From the foregoing it will be seen that the idea of Guido having drawn his picture from memory, or from a glance, when the unfortunate Beatrice was led to execution, is erroneous; the confession of Lucrezia and Giacomo, at the last moment, exonerates this martyr from all connivance or assistance at the fatal tragedy; and if any part of the history is true which relates to her close confinement at Petrella, it is obvious, with the exception of the letter addressed to Guerra, and forwarded by Marzio, Beatrice never had a chance of carrying out any scheme, since she was perfectly estranged from her mother and her brother. The whole of the details are so circumstantial, the pleadings of the lawyers, the words of the pope, the remonstrances of

the cardinal, the confessions and tortures, with the judges who presided, must give a stamp of veracity to the history of the Cenci. The ruin and desolation which followed, was only the black pall thrown by the succeeding popes over the errors and cruelties of Clement VIII.; and as popes are infallible, succeeding ages have branded Beatrice as a parricide, and involved her in the crimes of the Cenci. But her picture still survives, and in that beautiful, artless countenance is a stronger assertion than Guido's "Innocenza."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE PAINTED VENUS.

We hardly ever drove over the streets of Rome, without one of the horses, or sometimes both, coming down; none but a Roman horse is safe on this classic ground; it is quite extraordinary how difficult it is for foreigners of the equine race. It was a thing of such very frequent occurrence with us, that latterly nobody took any notice of it. I would strongly recommend selecting a clean public carriage, and there are plenty to be found in the Piazza di Spagna, to hiring any carriage by the month. Riding over the Roman pavement is a business of danger, and walking, excepting in the Corso, and one or two favoured spots, is a chance for the doctors; the most desperate hunters generally mount outside of the city.

In walking through the streets, the eye is constantly attracted by the various prints of all that is to be seen; and if you can set the pickpockets at defiance, you will be much amused by the variety which is offered to view. There are no very remarkable shops in Rome, as are seen in London and Paris; and the pontifical government, in its paternal care of the innocence of its subjects, has taken precaution that modesty should not be offended; but I doubt if in any city, with a similar population of 175,838 souls, there is more immorality than in Rome; if it does not meet you in the streets, it is suggested at every corner, and carried into every house. It not unfrequently happens, that a too strict legislation against vice leads to greater immorality; and every traveller who is well acquainted with Stockholm, would admit the truth of the remark.

It by no means follows that because a city has four thousand five hundred priests and friars, and one thousand nine hundred nuns, that either piety or chastity prevail; some writers declare that the constant exhibition of nude statues excites to vice, whilst others look at the cold marble with a colder look, and de-

clare that "to the pure in mind all things are pure;" but I strongly recommend those who are wavering between virtue and a slight inclination to vice, to beware of the painted Venus.

There seldom, if ever, has been an English sculptor of more just renown than John Gibson; and any man who has studied the beauties of his atelier, in the Via della Fontanella, will place him, without any hesitation, on a level with Canova. What varied beauties attract the eye at every turn! what grace, what symmetry, what modesty (there is nothing so dangerous as that modesty), beam in every form; one might wish, with Pygmalion, to find the statues warm, for very few people could say with Byron:

> "I've seen more pretty women ripe and real,
> Than all the nonsense of their stone ideal."

Byron never saw Gibson's painted Venus; and it is a very dangerous Venus to gaze upon.

This colouring of statues is very old; in the studii, at Naples, there are plenty of Grecian marbles which were coloured, and which two thousand years of time have not yet rubbed off. Gibson, in imitation, for it is impossible

to give him the originality of the invention, has, with consummate skill, managed to give the Venus the exact colouring of human flesh, and he has given also, the clear blue eye, the rosy lip, and peach-bloom cheek of youth and beauty. The form is not that of one person—there is not such perfection alive, in spite of Byron; and this Venus, like that of Zeuxis, is the result of several models, all exquisite in some particular part; for in the living beauty, no one ever yet found perfection. It is rather dangerous to mention it, but I believe the principal model is alive and blooming.

Mr. Gibson is not only a sculptor, but a man of refinement of mind, and therefore not a man "to hide his light under a bushel." The statue is placed upon a pedestal exactly in proportion to the figure, and the Venus is covered with a transparent gauze; this, as Gibson remarked, was merely *to keep off the dust*; but it has a very extraordinary effect, and I really think I should have been obliged to look through my fingers, as Spanish ladies peep through the small glass holes in their fans, had any of the young and modest specimens of sentimental females been present, when this slight covering was removed.

Behold the nude in all its nudity—you could almost swear it was alive; and if any fanatic had declared he had seen this virgin wink her eyes, I should have thought it a very probable event. Of all the statues, ancient or modern, —and that Grecian slave was a dangerous one, although ladies and gentlemen turned and twisted her about most unceremoniously at the Exhibition,—I have never seen anything so exquisitely natural as this of Gibson; and if from any determination not to believe perfection possible, I must find a fault, it would be in the coiffure of this inimitable statue. The Venus de Medicis has not rounder limbs, or finer proportions, and this is much more stately; the Florentine Venus is too small; this is the exact proportion of a *fine* woman—not a pigmy on the one hand, or clumsy on the other; and the features are beautiful. Around you are thousands of lovely designs and exquisitely finished statues; but you will stand before this Venus, and never take your eyes from her. I have not the least doubt, that if Gibson placed this statue in a room covered with dark velvet, and admitted the light from a small aperture, so as only to fall upon the Venus, he would require a strong body of police to keep order at the door, and

he would very soon receive as much more than he is to receive for it. There is a Venus in Parian marble in the Palazzo Chigi; there are plenty of Venuses in the Museum of the Vatican; and even the Venus of Praxiteles, which was so very natural that a pope had it covered with bronze drapery, cannot, in my opinion, surpass, in form or in just proportions, the painted Venus of Gibson.

There is always a vast difference of opinion concerning statues, and perhaps, to change from the soft, voluptuous feminine form of the Venus to the Laocoon, it will be easy to see how difficult it is to get the best judges to agree in opinion. Michael Angelo called it "the wonder of art," and Julius II. rewarded the discoverer, Felice de Fredis, most handsomely. Byron, in his enthusiasm, has poured forth the torrent of his splendid poetry to enhance the interest; but John Bell, who was an invalid, and who looked calmly and profoundly at all objects, who was a most distinguished anatomist, and whose eye was not to be easily deceived, has pronounced it a caricature, contrary to nature, faulty in anatomy, and altogether at variance with muscular proportions. There certainly is much to applaud in Bell's judgment, since it appears that many others,

Canova, for instance, are of opinion that the right arm of Laocoon is not in its original position. There have been plenty of artists to make arms, but none have succeeded; and the statue remains with an arm, according to Bell, quite impossible in reality, quite at variance with nature. It may be great presumption in me, but I prefer the copy of this famous work of art, by Bandinelli, in the Palazzo Vecchio, at Florence. And thus, as critics differ, so must that talented man, Gibson, be contented to hear such miserable judges as myself prefer a copy to the original, and regret the decoration of the hair in the painted Venus.

I have not the slightest doubt that the ancient Romans were a remarkably fine race of men; but they are sadly deteriorated. A cabbage is but a sea-weed, grown great by care and cultivation; it will return to its original state by neglect; and I am much of opinion the remark would be just, relative to human nature. Amongst the higher classes of the Romans, there is yet to be found the most exquisite beauty—the finely chiselled features, the dark clear eye, the raven hair, and all that is expressive of passion or intellect; but such beauties are very rare indeed, and must not be sought for in the lower classes; here, however, some of the Roman bra-

very still exists, and in the last revolution these people exhibited a valour worthy of all praise.

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It never was my intention in this work to give descriptions of places far better described in hand-books, nor to go creeping along the road from one town to another, mentioning the vines and the olives en route; but I devoted some time to the political feeling of the oppressed people, and most safely can I bear out the remark of the "Times," that the ashes from a corporal's pipe would ignite all Italy. The Austrian domination is haughty and harsh, and no people are more thoroughly detested. The withdrawal of the French troops from Rome would be to render the papal chair very insecure; and when the head of the church only finds support in foreign bayonets, his position is one of extreme danger.

For a moment all is kept quiet by coercion and the police: the latter have ears and eyes in every street, in every church, house, or corner; and the traveller and the inhabitant should, if he feels no love of liberty, no detestation of thraldom, for ever remember, and act up to the Italian proverb—

"Chi vuol vivere in Pace
Vede, ascolta, è tace."

THE END.

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